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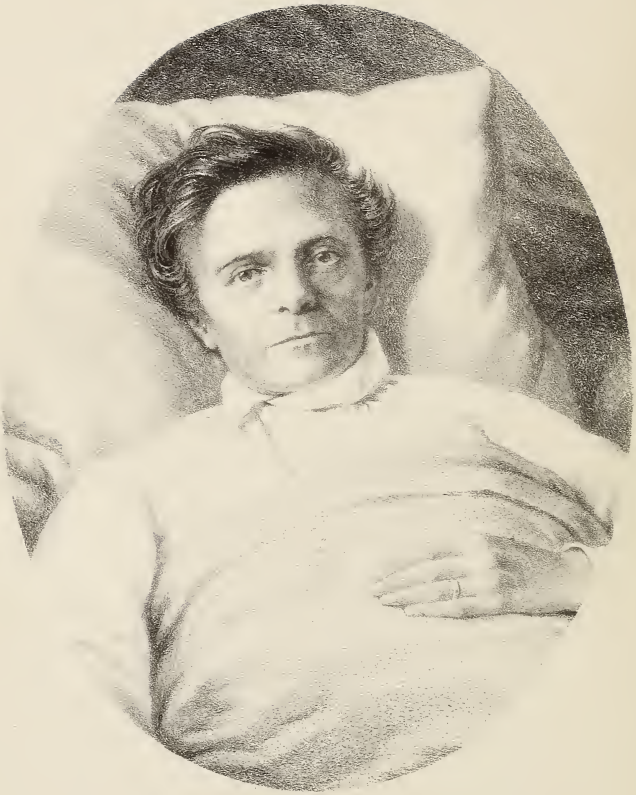
THE PARTING WORDS

OF

ADOLPHE MONOD.

". . . Those touching and edifying addresses published under the title of 'The Adieux of Adolphe Monod.' The speaker was a French Protestant pastor, eminent for piety and for his extraordinary abilities as a preacher. The pulpit from which he spoke—and it is sometimes the most effective of all pulpits—was a death-bed, around which, Sunday by Sunday (for he lingered long), he gathered as many members of his little flock as the sick-room would hold, and received with them the Holy Communion, and spoke to them of such subjects as the 'Regrets of a Dying Man.'"

EDWARD MEYRICK GOULBOURN, D. D.,
Dean of Norwich, etc.



Adolphe Monod

LES ADIEUX D'ADOLPHE MONOD.

THE PARTING WORDS

OF

ADOLPHE MONOD

TO HIS FRIENDS AND THE CHURCH.

OCTOBER, 1855, TO MARCH, 1856.

2.51.D

[*TRANSLATED FROM THE FIFTH PARIS EDITION.*]

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PREFACE.

Adolphe Monod was removed from the church on earth on the 6th of April, 1856, after an illness of two years. The first six months of this illness were passed in compulsory repose and inactivity; then came six months in which he continued his ministry in spite of advancing disease; and finally, nearly a year of suffering (as he said himself)—suffering constantly increasing in intensity and persistency.

The addresses now presented to the public were delivered during the autumn and winter of 1855–'56, beginning from the time that he first knew his malady was incurable, and continuing until the day it pleased God to put an end at once to his preaching and his sufferings.

Toward the close of September, 1855, Monod and his family recognized the grave character of his disease, and from that time he prepared himself peace-

fully for his departure, if such were the will of God, without, however, either losing the hope of recovery or ceasing to desire it; trusting indeed that the Lord might accomplish for him what human art could not venture to hope for. He felt then the need of drawing still closer to God, and when one of his friends—a colleague in the ministry—spoke to him of the Holy Communion "as a most powerful and too-much-neglected means of grace, counselling him to avail himself of it frequently," he gladly accepted his advice, and determined to commune every Sunday, inviting in turn all the friends who might desire to receive with him to do so.

He hoped, indeed to, do still more. Having felt himself able, twice in the space of a few days, to address his family at considerable length, he was so much encouraged, that he conceived the idea of availing himself of the occasion of the weekly communion, to speak a few words to the friends who might be present. This was the origin of the regular Sunday services in his sick-room. The first took place on October 14, 1855, and they were continued without interruption until March 30, 1856.

An opportunity of preaching the Gospel being once again granted him, in embracing it, Monod signally displayed the spirit of Christian liberality and breadth

of view with which he was so deeply imbued, and which gave him prominence not only in *his own* Church, but in the *whole* Church of the faithful at large. He looked upon all as brothers who shared his faith, to whatever particular Christian denomination they might belong, and hence the pastors of the Reformed Church, and the Lutheran, the Independent, and Wesleyan, each in turn presided at the feast of brotherly love, at the bedside of their suffering and dying brother. He added thus to the happiness of working for the Gospel the joy (to use his own words) of laboring for "that church of the future to which we all look forward," and with which he wished now to unite himself in anticipation.[1]

The service was celebrated in the bedroom of the sufferer. The bread and the cup were placed upon a table near his bed, and at the table stood the officiating pastor. Monod's family with a small number of friends (in all from thirty to forty persons) occupied seats around him, of which there were always too few, however sparingly the invitations were necessarily is-

[1] It may perhaps interest the reader to know the names of the several pastors who in turn performed the service. They were, Messrs. Frederick Monod, William Monod, Meyer, Grandpierre, Gauthey, Vaurigand (of Nantes) Vallette, Armand-Delille, Vermeil, Fisch, John Monod, Edmond de Pressensé, Petit, Paumier, Zipperlen, Hocart, Louis Vernes, Boissonnas, and Vulliet.

sued. He made it a point to vary the little congregation from week to week, and thus to receive all in turn, who had requested the privilege of being present.[1] The services consisted of an invocation, followed by singing a psalm or hymn, a prayer, and the reading of a chapter from the Bible, and then the administration of the Sacrament, after which Monod began his discourse.

Those who had heard him on previous occasions, before his illness, could form some idea of the peaceful serenity which pervaded his manner and tone; of his earnest Christian love toward those whom he was addressing; of his occasional energy and winning, persuasive eloquence: but only those who heard him in these his last days, can really feel and appreciate all that he was.

The service, as we have already seen, was the result of circumstances, and had been neither premeditated nor prepared in advance. The same may be said of the words of the pastor. Oftentimes he was not a preacher exhorting his flock, but rather a suffering

[1] In the month of March, owing to his failing strength, Monod was able to receive his friends in his bedroom for an hour only, and at the last four services they were obliged to stand round his bed to hear his discourse, retiring afterward into an adjoining room, where the Holy Communion was administered, which was brought to the sufferer by the officiating clergyman.

brother—a brother on the brink of the grave—giving counsels, and warnings gathered from his own experience. He spoke with much simplicity, and in the easy, familiar style which will be noticed in the following pages. On the other hand, the sonorous voice of his earlier days often returned to him with the earnest, vivid, spontaneous train of thought and manner, and the rapid, convincing accent which distinguished him in former times. Deprived of the ministry to which he had formerly devoted himself, and which indeed was his life, this new ministry became very dear to him, humble and small in comparison though it necessarily was, from the condition of his health and the circumstances connected with it. He spoke as his strength would permit, and was always too feeble to exert himself for any length of time. Long preparatory labor was of course out of his power; so he contented himself at first with a few moments' meditation on the subject upon which he was about to speak. His ideas were either drawn from his own experience, or suggested by reflection in the course of the week; sometimes he consulted with those about him upon the choice of a subject, and often his own sufferings furnished it, and he delighted then to show forth how a Christian should employ his suffering for the glory of God.

Some time later, finding that his life was prolonged beyond his anticipations, and that God was calling him to suffer and to teach from his bed of suffering for a longer time than he had at first contemplated, he desired to collect and unite such of his lectures as would admit of it into groups; hence arose two series. The first consists mainly of counsels drawn from his own experience, under the title "Regrets of a Dying Man." In the second, he exhibits the results[1] (as he calls them) to which his experience and faith had led him. He prepared himself now with more care, spending part of Saturday and sometimes of Saturday night in dictating notes at considerable length, which indeed sometimes amounted to the lecture itself, and then had these notes read over to him shortly before he began to speak. He soon found, however, that this method cramped his freedom, for he felt bound to follow exactly the plan which he had traced in advance, and this often led him too far, causing him fatigue, for he went beyond the limits assigned him by his strength in order to complete the development of his thoughts as sketched in the notes. So, after having prepared four lectures in this manner (those

[1] These titles are thus given by Monod himself. The first series comprises Nos. XIII.–XVIII.; the second Nos. XIX.–XXIII. To the latter he adds also No. X.

delivered in the month of February), he abandoned it and returned to his original plan.

It is certainly surprising that, suffering as he was day and night from pain, always acute and sometimes extreme, Monod should have been able to bear the fatigue of a service of an hour's duration every Sunday, in addition to the labor of composing and delivering a discourse sometimes several pages in length. We have seen how he prepared himself in the few moments of freedom from pain that were granted him, and even during his suffering and in spite of it. The fatigue occasioned by their delivery was doubtless very great. His organs of speech had, however, preserved an extraordinary vigor, and it was astonishing to hear so firm and strong a voice from a frame so broken and wasted with disease. The effort he was forced to make to collect and fix his thoughts and clothe them in words—often at the moment enduring acutest pain—could not fail to react upon him with increased suffering.

But God vouchsafed him on each Sunday, as indeed on each day of the week, the necessary measure of relief, or of patience and energy. Sometimes his pains left him, or at all events were alleviated for a short time, and sometimes he so far controlled and mastered his suffering as to be able to speak in spite of it.

The hours which immediately followed the service were frequently most painful, especially at first. He knew it, but resigned himself cheerfully.

"I am suffering very much," he said one Sunday evening, "but so it must be from Sunday to Monday morning; it is a sacrifice that I gladly offer to God."

On another occasion, in one of his prayers, he says: "And if each week the privilege of preaching Thy word be mine, at the cost of redoubled suffering to myself, Thy will and not mine be done!"

On November 25th (we like to quote Monod's own words, that the reader may the better understand his feelings in relation to his new ministry) he says:

"I suffered very much this morning; there was even reason to fear that I might not be able to speak; but God relieved me from pain for an hour, expressly to permit me to glorify Him, and has given me grace to fulfil once more the duties of the humble ministry which is so great a consolation to me."

On March 2d, a month before his death, he says: "We have reached another Sunday, and God has permitted me to say a few words to my little flock, in spite of the increasing weakness to which my failing voice bears witness. May He deign to support me even unto the end, and if it be possible (for far be it from me to prescribe to Him), may He grant me the

gracious favor that I may not cease to proclaim His name until I cease to live!"

God did support him unto the end, and granted him the last favor for which he prayed. Dating from October 14th, the service was celebrated every Sunday during nearly six months. On Easter-day, March 23d, he was able to deliver his last lecture, upon the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, but it was only after long uncertainty as to whether he were strong enough, and with so much difficult effort, that he appeared to faint as he uttered the last words.

On March 30th, although his weakness had been for several days so rapidly increasing that he was almost unable to take nourishment, and could only speak with extreme difficulty, "hardly knowing if he could make himself heard, he summoned up all his little remaining strength to glorify the eternal and infinite love of God," and by an act of thanksgiving and prayer terminated his ministry upon earth.

From March 30th to April 6th, he sunk still more rapidly, and had no longer strength to speak even to members of his family; so that it became necessary to countermand the meeting appointed for the latter date. God, however, called His servant to Himself on that same day before the hour of assembling had arrived. Thus was his prayer, so often repeated, granted him:

"May my life terminate only with my ministry, and my ministry only with my life!"

It only remains for us to offer some explanation upon the subject of the discourses contained in this volume. It will be asked how they have been preserved and reproduced; for we have seen that not one of them was ever written out by their author.

From the very beginning, M. Monod's children undertook to take his words down from his lips, and wrote them out afterward from memory, with the help of their copious notes. These often comprised every word of the lecture, which was then reproduced with great fidelity, and more and more so as the children became more accustomed to their task. This was, at first, even without Monod's knowledge, and always without any aid on his part. The only lecture revised by himself is the twentieth, "The Holy Scriptures." He had it read to him twice, and corrected it with considerable care, making important alterations. We may add that he was surprised to find his words so accurately taken down.

The task of compilation was therefore little more than mere writing, it being only necessary to copy the notes taken by the different persons, comparing and completing them, each from the other, aided by their memory.

The last lectures were reproduced in this way, and almost exactly as they were spoken. The earlier ones also are given with great fidelity. The first is the only one which was written out from memory alone. Those, however, who heard it delivered will find nothing in our version that they will not remember, and will, besides, recognize the manner of the author; and throughout the entire volume, if we have perhaps not given *all* Monod's words, we have, at least, given *only* his words and none other; even if we have noticed any slight carelessness of language, or have thought that here and there some words or phrases might be wanting to complete or unite a train of ideas, or better elucidate them, we have preferred to leave any such slight defect uncorrected, rather than attribute any thing to the author which is not his own.

A few passages have seemed to require some very trifling change to make their meaning more clear, but, nevertheless, very little alteration or correction of any sort has been made, and the text, though never penned by its author's hand, is very nearly an exact repetition of his spoken words.

Only two or three of the titles of the discourses were designated by Monod himself. The Scripture texts at the beginning of many of them were, for the most part (especially in the case of the later discourses),

selected by him, and read aloud at his request before he began to speak.

We have given, also, at the conclusion of several lectures, prayers, or parts of prayers, which he uttered at the time.

The portrait at the beginning of the volume is by a clever artist, from a daguerreotype taken in January, 1856. All who saw and heard M. Monod at these Sunday services will appreciate its excellence, and see him there precisely as they saw him delivering his lectures.

We trust that this volume may contribute to the glory of God, and to the hastening of His kingdom. In the beautiful words of St. Paul to the Hebrews, "By it he being dead yet speaketh."

While contemplating a man who has furnished us with so strong a testimony to the power of Faith, may the reader lift his eyes to Him from whom all grace, excellence, and all good and perfect works do proceed!

"Let us not forget," said Monod, on the evening of Sunday, March 2d, "to water with our prayers what we have now planted in the name of the Lord; and let us pray Him that no barren curiosity and no merely human affection may take the place of a single desire to glorify God, either in him who speaks or in those who listen."

In the like spirit, we offer this volume to the people of God. May they receive it in the same, with the jealous desire that to Him be all the glory, who is the giver of all good!

It must be further permitted to us, in presenting this book to the public, to glorify the goodness of the God of truth, as exhibited in it.

It is nearly a year since the Church first took alarm for the life of Monod, and began to pray to God for him, although He had already apparently sealed him for eternal life. He was taken away after eight months of prayer for him and eight months of suffering. And what suffering it was! But, as he said himself, "it was not in vain that he felt himself borne upon the hearts and in the prayers of God's people."

In taking away his health, his ability to preach, and at last his life, God granted his prayers, and those of his brethren for him, though in another way. It was to exhibit him as an example to all His people. Monod's preaching required the stamp given to it by this final and cruel illness. Those who heard him, both in his strength and in his weakness, can say whether, in all the vigor of his body and mind, the words of the preacher were more efficacious or spoke more to the heart, than those of the sick and dying Christian man. During his long illness, when God

caused the power of Faith to shine forth so brilliantly in him, He permitted him still to speak in His name every Sunday. He granted it to him even until the last day of his life, and has made this little book to spring from his long and bitter suffering, as an humble but eloquent testimony to the Gospel. It is perhaps a single instance, in the whole history of the Church, that a man, at the point of death, expecting, but not daring to wish for it, should proclaim, week after week, with ever-increasing firmness, patience, peace, and joy, the same Gospel doctrines which he had held and preached, and in which he had lived, during the twenty-five years of his active ministry.

To God be all the glory!

In a sermon preached on Christmas-day, 1854, from the text, "And a sword shall pierce thy own soul also," Monod used a few words which we quote here to show how entirely God verified in the preacher himself the words which He put into his lips. He had been showing that the *crucified life* is the true life of the Christian, and in particular of the minister of God's Word, and closed his remarks with these words:

"And if, among the crosses which He gives you to bear, there be one which seems to you—I will not say more burdensome than others—but apparently de-

structive of the usefulness of your ministry, forever ruinous, seemingly, to all hope of success in your holy mission; if temptation from without be added to temptation within; if the blow appears to fall on body, soul, and spirit; if, in fine, all seems hopelessly lost—well, shall I say accept this cross, or rather, these many crosses? Welcome them! welcome them with an especial spirit of submission, of hope, and of fortitude, as afflictions in which, and out of which, the Lord will disclose to you a new mission. Welcome them, as the starting-point of a ministry in bodily weakness and bitter suffering which He has reserved for you as your last and best, and which He will make to abound in fruits unto life, as never did your earlier ministry, in the days of your strength and joy gone by!"

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I.

ALL IN SCRIPTURE IS IDEAL, NAMELY, ITS STANDARD IS NEVER LESS THAN PERFECTION.

(October 14, 1855.)

I AM so happy and so grateful, dear friends, beloved brethren and sisters, that I am able to partake with you of the body and blood of our Saviour. That flesh is meat indeed, and that blood is drink indeed, to those who receive it in faith, by the aid of the Holy Spirit.

There is one feature of the Holy Scriptures which is of itself sufficient to prove them to be the Word of God: I mean that *every thing found there is ideal.* They contain nothing but the absolute and the perfect.

Holy Scripture never calls us to a certain measure of holiness by a certain measure of faith, for degree or measure of any sort is contrary to the instinct of the Bible, because contrary to God.

The ideal of Scripture is not like the ideal of the poet, who raises things of earth into the highest heaven, but precisely the reverse; for it regards visible things as types only of the invisible—the alone real—and sees all things from the stand-point whence God sees them.

This thought struck me this morning, as I was reflecting, before God, upon what I should say to you of the Holy Communion, and of the cross of Jesus Christ, where alone we can find remission of sin.

Scripture invariably presents to us *sin* as ideal. None of us can form the faintest idea of the horrible sinfulness of sin in the sight of God. We have always lived in an atmosphere so saturated with sin, upon this earth which drinks in iniquity like water, and devours it like bread, that we are no longer able to see the sin that surrounds us in all directions.

I will tell you in few words, of my own experience. We find in the Bible these words: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another."

For a long while, it seemed impossible for me to accept this assertion, for it appeared to me to bear marks of manifest exaggeration. I confess that, even after it had pleased God, on the day appointed by

Him from all eternity, to turn my heart to Him, it was still a long while before I could bring myself to believe it entirely; and still further, I confess that since then, even now this day, I am not able to comprehend it in its fulness, though quite convinced that it is perfectly true, and that, if I cannot realize it in my own experience, the fault is in myself. Hence I have been brought to see the necessity of a testimony preëxistent to ourselves, beyond us and above us.

I accept the assertion, therefore, as coming from God, because I find it in His Word, and I pray Him to reveal its meaning to me by His Holy Spirit. A slow change of feeling has come over me, not noticeable from year to year—not nearly so rapid, but only after a series of years—and I am now, by the grace of God, able to see this doctrine more clearly, and to feel its truth more and more deeply in my own heart. I am sure that when this veil of flesh shall be laid aside, I shall see and recognize that the words in question present the most faithful delineation, the most truthful portrait of my own heart—I mean of my natural heart.

Let us pray to God to reveal to us our state of sinfulness, without, however, urging Him too far, for He knows full well that if we were to advance in this knowledge faster than in the knowledge of His mercy, we must fall into despair.

Pardon is also represented to us everywhere in Scripture as ideal. If only a part of our sins were pardoned, if out of a thousand or a million (were it possible to number our sins) a single one were unforgiven, our pardon would avail us nothing. But our pardon is complete. The passage which has just been read to you (2 Cor. V. 21) is one of my favorite verses. Jesus Christ has not only expiated some of our sins, but has expiated *sin* in its entirety. He has not been regarded as a sinner, but has been made *sin* itself, and—mystery of mysteries—the curse of God in its full force has fallen upon His innocent and holy head.

In like manner, we are not only just in Him, but made *Justice* itself; so that when God looks upon us in Jesus Christ, He sees us even like unto His beloved Son Himself, and finds us altogether pleasing and attractive in His sight. We who believe, have been given by God to Christ as the price of His sacrifice. He can no more break his word to us, than to Jesus Himself. He has pledged Himself to us so strongly, by all His glorious excellencies and perfections, that this gift of infinite mercy becomes a right in virtue of our perfect justice in Jesus Christ.

The same words of Scripture which show us what sin is in the eyes of God, show us at the same time how completely and entirely He has obliterated it.

He has "cast our sins behind His back," as if afraid of seeing them again. He has "cast them into the depths of the sea;" "blotted them out like a thick cloud;" "scattered them like the morning cloud." Thus we see what God meant by forgetting sin. He is represented as making an effort to forget, and does not only forget, but utterly obliterates and annihilates it.

Lastly, Holy Scripture is ideal in what it teaches us of *sanctification*. We do not form any adequate idea of what Scripture requires of us, nor of the degree of holiness to which we can and ought to attain. What fulness in these words: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and to prove to us that this is not a mere wish on the part of the apostle, he adds immediately: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." It is no more possible for Him to refuse us this grace than it is to conceive of His breaking His word.

And how are we to attain to this holiness? In what respect did those saints of old excel, whose examples the Bible holds out to us? Not in knowledge, not in natural gifts, but in faith. Look at St. James. To show us the power of faith and of prayer, he selects

the most wonderful man perhaps of Holy Writ, in the most miraculous of His miracles. He sets before us the boldness of the prayer of Elias as the simplest thing in the world, and proposes it as an example to the humblest and most insignificant of us, to show us what can be effected by persevering, earnest prayer, "the fervent prayer of the righteous man" (literally, the energumenic or fanatical prayer).

Oh! if we could feel in our hearts, each one of us, from this day forth, the enormity of sin, the fulness and completeness of its pardon, and the power of the holiness to which we ought to attain, what a change would come over our lives, and what salutary influence might we exercise upon the whole Church!

PRAYER.

O God! Thou who knowest all the misery and suffering that sin has brought upon this miserable world and its wretched inhabitants; Thou who seest all the cruel suffering endured at this moment,[1] the sight of which we could not bear, we commend to Thee all the afflicted and distressed, that Thou wouldest be pleased to pour out upon them the treasures of Thy grace and consolation. We cannot name them

[1] Referring to the war then raging in the Crimea.

all to Thee, but Thou canst name them to Thyself. We commend to Thee all victims of war, all families in sorrow and mourning, and all others now living in anxiety and distress. We commend to Thee all the oppressed and persecuted for righteousness' sake. We commend to Thee all slaves. Look upon the thousands and millions of slaves under the yoke of men who profess Thy name, "servants of Christ" who are not servants. We commend the poor to Thee—ah! the poor!—and the sick, especially the poor sick. We commend to Thee all who know Thee, that it may please Thee to support them, and send down upon them Thy peace and Thy comfort. And we commend also to Thy grace those who do not know Thee, that it may please Thee to reveal Thyself to them, for, if they have not Thee, they have no alternative than despair.

I, who am suffering somewhat, acknowledge and confess Christ and His peace. I thank Thee for the joy which Thou pourest into my soul. Thou wilt perhaps call upon us to part from each other for a short time, but what matter? We know that, by Thy grace, we shall one day be reunited at Thy side! . . .

II.

HAPPY IN LIFE AND HAPPY IN DEATH.

(October 21, 1855.)

PHILIPPIANS I. 19-26.—"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."

I DESIRE, my dear friends, to call your attention to the holy apostle's view of Life and of Death. Remark, in the first place, the words which form his starting-point, and, as it were, the motto of his Christian life: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is

gain" (a literal translation); that is, my life, my natural life which I am living to-day, and may lose tomorrow, is employed in no other way than in following and serving Jesus Christ.

The words "to die is gain" require some explanation. The apostle is asking himself whether it would be better for him to live or to die. The question has often presented itself to us, and we may have answered it even as the apostle did; but, it is greatly to be feared, in a very different spirit. When we have desired death, it has been—"I do not know whether I am more in dread of the afflictions of this life, from which death will relieve me, or of the terrors of death, from which life will preserve me:" or, in other words, life and death seem to us to be two evils of which it is difficult to determine which is the less.

The apostle, on the other hand, regards them as two immense blessings, and does not know which is the greater. Personally, he would prefer to die, that he might be with Christ. For the sake of the world, he would prefer to live, to serve Jesus Christ, to increase His kingdom, and to win souls for Him. This is the true view of life and death, beautiful because based upon and hallowed by love. It is the view taken by our Saviour Jesus Christ Himself.

Let us try and appreciate this feeling. Life is a

blessing, and death is also a blessing. Death sets us free from the miseries of this life, and, even though life may have been full for us of all the joys that earth can give, death gives us access to a joy and a glory of which we can form no adequate idea.

We ought, then, to look upon death as desirable in itself, and should not shrink from any thing which tends to keep it in our minds. All illnesses, all instances of sudden death, all that passes around us, should remind us that it may come to any one of us at any moment.

Life is also good and desirable, because it enables us to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, to glorify and to imitate Him. It is not worth while to live for any thing else. Our strength, our breath, life, faculties, all that we possess, ought to be devoted, consecrated, sanctified, crucified, for the service of our Lord. The crucified life is the truly happy life, even in the bitterest earthly suffering, for in it we can both enjoy and shed abroad the most precious blessings. Let us love and value life, then, that we may fill it with Jesus Christ. To attain to this feeling, however, we must be transformed into new creatures by the Holy Spirit alone. Remember, it is not only that our own spirit must be supported, consoled, and strengthened, but the Spirit of God Himself must come and dwell in us.

We are often diligent in labor to cultivate and adorn our own minds and spirits, and it is right and proper that we should be so, but it is not enough. We must have more. We must have Jesus Christ Himself dwelling in our hearts by His Holy Spirit.

Ah! my friends, if we reflect upon the promises of the Gospel, we shall find how far, how very far we are from possessing and enjoying them. May it please God to unveil the heaven above us, to reveal all to us, to fill us with all wisdom and knowledge, and show us that even here on earth we can attain unto a perfect joy in anticipation of the fulness of happiness and of victory which is in store for us! May He make us accept and enjoy the blessings which He delights to shower down upon us, if we will receive and accept them! May He show us, and make us feel, that if earth has the power to crush and trouble and oppress us, it has no power to affect the gracious qualities of Heaven, to bring to naught the promises of God, nor to cast a veil, no, not even the slightest shadow, upon the love with which God, our Father, loves us in Jesus Christ!

III.

ON FREQUENT COMMUNION.

(October 28, 1855.)

My dear friends, I wish you to know that during my illness I have received the communion very frequently, finding much comfort, and, I trust, much benefit from it.

It is a great evil that the communion should be so rarely celebrated in our Church, but an evil which efforts on all sides are being made to remedy. Our reformers, in bringing about this state of things, took especial care to explain that it was only a temporary arrangement, made to correct serious abuses which had crept into the primitive Church. But what they intended to last only for a limited time, has continued for centuries in the greater part of our churches. We are at last approaching the time when frequent communion will be restored to us.

Calvin has said somewhere, that the communion ought to be celebrated at least every Sunday. Remark this "*at least.*" If every Sunday be *at least*, what would be *at most?* At most would be to take it as the first Christians did, according to Calvin (and this is a clear inference from the Acts of the Apostles), every day, from house to house, after the family meal.[1]

You must all have remarked that rare communion gives a strange and extraordinary idea—I hardly know what—of the communion itself, of the preparation which ought to precede and of the emotions which follow it. There is reason, too, to believe that rare communion has given rise to most of the controversies on the subject. Frequent communion, on the other hand, enables us to understand the true nature of the Sacrament much more clearly, and it is impossible that daily communion should fail to make it entirely plain to us. It would teach us to look upon it as one of the simplest acts of our Christian life, in the same

[1] Commentators differ from this view of the meaning of κατ' οἶκον, translated "from house to house."

Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, says: κατ' οἶκον, *at home*, or in *the house* or *room* to which they habitually resorted for worship . . . . perhaps—probably—*in their own upper room*, where the Holy Ghost descended on the church upon the day of Pentecost.

The bishop quotes St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in confirmation of this view.—[TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

way that our daily meals are among the simplest acts of our ordinary life.

However this may be, the Holy Communion will be of the largest profit to us, if we look upon it as the most simple expression of our faith; in this way we shall derive the highest benefit from it, and it will feed our souls with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The words of our confession of faith upon this subject are so beautiful, that I must quote them to you. They comprise all I could wish to say:

"We confess that the Holy Supper is a pledge of our union with Jesus Christ; that He has not only died and risen again for us, but that He really feeds and nourishes us with His body and blood, that we may be one with Him, and that His life may be our life. Although He is in heaven until He shall come to judge the world, we believe, nevertheless, that, by the secret and incomprehensible virtue of His Spirit, He nourishes and quickens us with the substance of His body and blood. We hold indeed that this is done in a spiritual manner, not desiring to substitute thought or imagination for effect and reality, but acknowledging that the mystery transcends in its depth the limits of our senses, and of the whole order of Nature. We believe that as in the Holy Supper, so also in Baptism,

God does give us really and in fact what is figured in each, and we unite therefore with the visible signs, the true possession and enjoyment of what is presented to us in them. Thus all who bring to the Holy Table of Christ a pure faith as a vessel receive truly what the outward signs signify; that is, that the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ serve no less as food and drink to the soul, than the bread and wine to the body. The bread and wine given us in the Holy Supper form really our spiritual nourishment, showing us, as if to our eyes, that the flesh of Jesus Christ is our food, and His blood our drink."

To this admirable quotation I will only add that the pastor, M. Verny, having read it one day to some Lutheran friends, who were discussing the subject of the Holy Communion with him, they said, "This is the exact expression of our faith;" to which M. Verny replied that the passage was taken from the confession of faith of the reformed churches; a proof that, in adhering exactly to Scripture, as in this case, the field of controversy is won by faith and charity.

Well, my friends, by the Communion which we have just celebrated, we bear our testimony to the fact that the flesh and blood of the Saviour are "meat and drink indeed," and that the whole Christian ambition of our souls is, that we may be nourished by them day

and night, and that we are to seek all our strength in a real, profound, living Communion with Jesus Christ.

It is by prayer that we can maintain ourselves in this Communion with Him, who will render us capable of doing what He has done, and of being what He has been. But it must be the prayer of faith, ardent, persevering, and accepting no refusal, desiring to receive and enjoy all that the Father has promised in His Word—never-ceasing prayer, which keeps the knees bent, and pursues its task through tears and blood *until* it has obtained what it has asked.

Oh, what strength we should have, and what joy unchangeable, independent of all the sufferings of this wretched body—a body perhaps already maimed and half ruined, but the temple of the Holy Spirit now, and to-morrow to be transformed into a glorious, spiritual body, filled with the Holy Ghost like the body of Jesus Christ Himself! What joy would be ours, I do not say if we had the means, for we have them, but if we used the means we have, of subduing the pains and conflicts of the flesh, and of reaching the heart of our Father, the joy of our Saviour, and the power of the Holy Spirit!

Meditate, I entreat you, upon the Holy Spirit. Read and read again the words of Jesus Christ in the

last chapters of St. John, the eighth and remaining chapters of the Romans, and learn what power of strength and consolation we have in the Holy Spirit, none less than God Himself.

Yea, Thyself, O God! who hast come to dwell in the body of Thy poor, sinful, miserable child, ruined by sin and suffering, but saved by grace, and washed in the blood of the Lamb without spot!—Having such precious promises, why should we allow ourselves to stop half-way? Why should we groan in hunger and thirst, when we have a table before us, so bountifully spread? We need only reach forth the hand of faith to be fed even to perfect satiety and to receive abundant life.

Ah! if this little handful of Christians here could resolve to be thoroughly and entirely happy; to pray as Elias did—*really pray;* if they would determine to conquer their natural cowardice, spiritual indolence, and unbelief—what could we not accomplish if we went about the world like the twelve apostles! We should rouse all Paris, winning and drawing with us all our brethren and sisters moved at seeing the Gospel realized in our lives!

Oh my God! our deepest misery is, that having so great and precious promises, we do so little. Come and help us! and grant that the little Communion in

this upper room may be for all who have partaken of it, or have been present at it, the germ of a new Christian life for this world and the next; that we may be so conformed to our Saviour Jesus Christ, that we may live as He lived; and even as He has said, "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father," so may we say, he who hath seen me hath seen my Master!

Pour down this blessing upon the friends who console me in my affliction—my so happy affliction!

IV.

THE PASTOR SUFFERING FOR THE GOOD OF THE FLOCK.

(November 4, 1855.)

How gracious is God, to give us, in the Holy Communion, so simple and at the same time so profound an image of the invisible grace of our Lord!

If we receive the teachings of Scripture upon the subject, we shall recognize that the whole basis of the Gospel is upon that table, for we find there two things: first, Jesus Christ dying for us, and His death, His blood, His expiatory sacrifice, our only hope of safety, accomplishing absolutely every thing for the elect of God; and, again, we find Jesus dead, who enters into us, and nourishes us, who gives us life by His body and blood, and makes us partakers of His nature, even as He Himself is partaker of the nature of the Father.

To die to ourselves, to live to Jesus Christ, by the

Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ having died for us upon the cross—this is the whole Gospel, all our faith, and all our Christian life.

I wish to add a few words, not as a matter personal to myself, but in the spirit of St. Paul, when he said, "I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you." Far be it from me, assuredly, to compare with his great sufferings, so directly in and for God's service, the trials with which it has pleased Him to favor me. But I desire, by the spirit in which I accept them, to convert them into an affliction borne for the Gospel, and, in a very humble measure, also for you. I desire that none of you be cast down. Perhaps some of my good friends are troubled and anxious at the thought of my sufferings. Do not be so! Give me this proof of your brotherly love, not to be troubled, but only profitably moved and awakened by them. Not that I do not suffer, nor that suffering is not grievous to me. I am no Stoic, but by the grace of God a Christian, and am not ashamed to say that there are moments when I cry aloud with tears far more than I pray. I remember that my Saviour "cried with a loud voice," with tears. But, although painful to the flesh, these afflictions are attended with so great blessings, that a sentiment of gratitude ought to predominate both in my heart and yours.

What a favor to me, dear friends, that God, in choosing one of us to remind the others of the lessons of life, of death, of sin, pardon, and sanctification, should have deigned to select me! What a privilege that, in choosing me, He has spared my brethren, and that He has chosen me to give you these lessons of eternal life! Think, too, how all that has befallen me is calculated to make me appreciate a Christian death, at whatever moment it may come to me. Let us not seek for any thing else than to glorify God. If it please Him to heal me, I pray Him that it may be for His glory; if it please Him to take me, I shall be happy to be received into His bosom. I cannot tell which would be better for me or for the Church, and leave myself entirely in His hands.

What a favor, too, to have been chosen to be thus matured by suffering! You have cause, then, to rejoice on my account. For yourselves, too, has not my affliction been instrumental in leading your thoughts to dwell upon death, eternity, and the truths of the Gospel? Has not the brotherly love, which unites us, induced you to pray? I feel that the people of God remember me in their prayers, and am filled with joy and penetrated with gratitude.

Well, is not this a great blessing to you? and do you not feel that all that has happened to me is cal-

culated to bring about in the more intimate circle of my friends, especially in my family, a spirit of peace and serenity, and that our house is in some small degree less imperfect than it has been hitherto, a house of prayer, where the name of God is constantly invoked? We have, then, many blessings to be thankful for.

Understand, also, what delight I have in the thought that I am afflicted for your good; because nothing else can bring my sufferings so near to those of my Saviour. I say, then, in the spirit of the same St. Paul whom I have already quoted, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church."

Oh, the wonder of God's peace! Oh, the power of the Gospel! oh, the bitterness of sin! oh, the immutable certainty of pardon! Let us battle against sin, my friends—it is the only evil, the only evil!

Now that I find myself face to face with sin, called upon to pass in review, before God, all the sins of my past life, and to crave His pardon for them, I feel how terrible the struggle is, and how deeply sin is rooted in us. How absurd and foolish it would be in us to complain of the trials which God sends us, since these very trials are not even enough to uproot our wretched

pride, our frightful selfishness, and, above all, our detestable unbelief!

May the peace of God be with us! Let us put aside all personal sentiments. Do not look upon me as father or friend, or at all events do so only in a very limited degree—look upon me, above all, as the minister of Jesus Christ, and pray God that, until my last breath, I may be faithful in my ministry. Do not look at the man in me, but contemplate the work which God desires to accomplish, both in me and in you.

Let us take courage. Let us pray God to fill us with His Spirit, to enable us to subdue the flesh by the Spirit, until, by taking us to Himself, He shall deliver us from all evil. Let us pray that, in a spiritual body and with sanctified soul, He may give us to taste, in Jesus Christ, of the joy, the pleasures, and the glory purchased and obtained for us alone, by His blood shed for us!

V.

A FEW WORDS ON READING THE BIBLE.

(November 11, 1855.)

On these occasions I am in the habit of addressing a few words of Christian exhortation to the friends who are good enough to come to me. To-day, however, my suffering deprives me of this consolation, and I must limit myself to telling you a fact in my Christian experience which may perhaps lead you to wholesome reflection upon the value of God's Word. I will relate to you with the greatest simplicity what happened to me last week.

One night, during which I had suffered very much, and slept very little, I composed myself upon my bed, toward the end of the night, about half-past four in the morning, in the hope of getting a little sleep. I asked the person who was sitting up with me (one of those

good young men[1] who are so kind as to devote a part of their strength and time for my benefit) to read me a chapter of the Word of God.

He proposed to read me the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. I assented, and begged him to go back to the sixth, and even to the fifth chapter, that we might have the whole train of thought. We read the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters consecutively, and my attention, interest, and admiration, were so vividly enlisted by the heavenly language of St. Paul (or, I should rather say, of the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Paul), that all thought of sleep left me.

We read the ninth and all the following chapters to the end, with unabated interest, and then the four first, in order to complete the whole Epistle.

Two hours were passed in this way, during which I thought only of listening to the Word of God, and of profiting by it, and then the Lord, in His goodness, granted me the repose of which I stood in need.

I cannot tell you how, in thus reading the Epistle to the Romans in its entirety, I was struck by the stamp of divinity, of truth, of holiness, of charity, and of power, which is imprinted on each page, and on

[1] During more than six months, a few young friends, nearly all medical students, sat up in turn with Monod every night. Their affectionate and devoted care and attention alleviated many a long hour of sleeplessness and pain.

each word. My young friend and I both felt (without having at first communicated our thoughts to each other) that we were listening to a voice from heaven, and that, independently of all the evidences which attest the inspiration and Divine authority of Holy Scripture, the internal testimony which it renders to itself is abundantly sufficient; even as Jesus Christ bore testimony to Himself by His works.

We felt also how useful it is to read Scripture in its entirety, and how much we lose in taking only portions, fragments, or detached verses, at a time. We can only understand a book by reading it, now and then, directly through.

We were taught that there are two ways in which we ought to study God's Word: the one, to read a book from the beginning to the end at once, to produce the impression now made upon us; and the other, to study each verse and word in detail.

Our strongest impression, however, was a feeling of humiliation. We said to each other, "Is it possible that, possessing such treasures, we neglect to avail ourselves of them!"

It seemed to us as though we had passed two hours in heaven. We were not only transported into the society of the best of men, of the privileged and inspired organs of the Holy Ghost, but felt ourselves

amid the elect angels, and in company with Jesus Christ Himself.

We determined, submitting our resolution to the care of Him who alone can protect the resolves of His children, to devote ourselves with new ardor to the study of the Scriptures, and, to this end, to give up, if need be, any amount of other reading, however useful and instructive, as not comparable with the Word of God. We resolved to live with His Word, even as we desire to live with God Himself; for, reading these words, inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, is really like a conversation with God.

I recommend to you, my dear friends, the constant study of the Word of God, and earnest and profound meditation upon it. It will raise us above all else. It will prove the strength of our life, the joy of our heart, and our powerful and effectual consolation, both in life and in death, through Jesus Christ.

I pray for it for you, as well as for myself. Amen.

VI.

GOD GLORIFIED IN SUFFERING.

(November 18, 1855.)

THE prayer which we have just heard from our brother's lips was full of the thought, that it is our duty, each one of us, according to his position, to glorify God.

I should like, in a few words, to be able to make you feel, and to feel myself, what an immense privilege it is to be called upon to glorify God. Think what it is! God, the sovereign Creator, the one author of all things, by whose will all is and was created; God, the alone Saviour of lost and guilty humanity, and the only consolation of suffering mortals; God, from whom all good doth proceed, who has no sort of need of us, invites us to add something to His glory in bearing our testimony to Him before His creatures; contributing thus our part to the sanctification of His name.

He desires that this shall be the one supreme law of our life.

True piety, as well as true wisdom and philosophy (even human philosophy), demands a single governing principle for the direction of our entire life, upon which we may base all our actions. This single principle, which some seek in the world, others in themselves or in a god of their own imagining, we find in the living and true God; the alone Holy, alone Wise, alone Eternal; upon whom alone depends not only our eternal happiness, but also the smallest comfort we can enjoy day by day from the emotions of our heart, or even from the sensations of our poor body.

Who are they whom He calls to contribute to His glory? He calls the angels; and happy are they, for they feel how great is their privilege. But not the angels alone. He calls us, too, miserable sinners who deserve His anger, and whom our evil deeds bring under His curse. He not only takes us by the hand and draws us up out of the bottomless abyss into which our sins have cast us, but as He raises us He says, "Now glorify Me!" as if we could render any thing to Him from whom we have received all, beginning with the pardon of our sins!

Ah! if we could only feel what a favor God bestows upon us by employing us to add something to

His glory, we should occupy ourselves with this alone. We should find in it, my dear friends, the sweetest and the deepest consolation that we can enjoy; for it is not pardoned sinners alone who are thus called upon to glorify God, after having been saved by Him, but also wretched, suffering sinners, dragging out their lives miserably in afflictions of soul and body. It would seem that such as these would be excluded from the privilege of glorifying God, absorbed as they are by the pains and sorrows of life. Ah! not at all. These are they who are most of all called upon to glorify Him, and they find in their suffering, as they found in their sins forgiven, new cause and motive for giving glory to Him who has taught us to say, "When I am weak, then I am strong." What a consolation for those who suffer to be able to say: "By my sufferings, borne patiently and peacefully (if I am not able to bear them joyously, and glory in them), I can render glory to God as I could not in any other manner!" What infinite sweetness do sufferers find in this reflection! Thus it is that affliction becomes a privilege; for to suffer is a privilege to the Christian, and, to suffer much, an especial privilege. All who suffer ought to enter into my thought, "and commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator."

We cannot, alas! do it of ourselves. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." The moment after we have been raised as it were to heaven by the simple words of the Gospel, our miserable flesh drags us down, takes us by the feet, brings us back to earth, and chains us there by the weight of suffering. My friends, this is our whole life's struggle, the battle of life and the battle of death.

But we have Jesus with us, the author and finisher of our faith, who has Himself been made perfect through suffering, and is therefore all-powerful to succor those who are tempted. Let our constant prayer be, "Lord, increase our faith!" "I believe, Lord, help Thou mine unbelief!"

Oh! dear friends, who in your brotherly kindness have come to unite with me in celebrating this sweet Communion—the living image of our communion with God and with each other—may God bless each one of you, may He give you the grace to live for His glory alone, to suffer only for His glory, and to speak alone for His glory, until it be granted you to die for His glory, in Jesus Christ crucified and risen again!

PRAYER.

Oh, my God, send down Thy grace in Jesus Christ upon each one of us with infinite liberality. Grant us

the grace to live in Thy Communion and to glorify Thee, that Thy will may be done upon this poor earth as it is done in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Look with pity upon this world for which Jesus died, plunged as it still is in darkness, misery, pollution, and crime. Look with pity upon Thy Church which Thou hast chosen out of the world, and which has turned away from Thy holy designs and taken rather the semblance of the world, even while calling itself Thy Church.

Look upon us and upon all Thy children. Look upon all who suffer. We commend to Thy protection the numerous and touching family of the afflicted, the sick, prisoners, slaves, the persecuted, especially those for righteousness' sake, and the oppressed of all kinds. Teach them to look upon Thee with the eyes of faith. Hasten the coming of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. May He come, and may we then see and know all that Thou hast done for us in sending Him into the world! Amen.

VII.

THE LOVE OF GOD MANIFESTED IN HIS PEOPLE.

(November 25, 1855.)

Overcome by pain and fatigue, I feared, dear friends, that I might not be able to address you to-day, but the Lord grants me the favor to do so still, having vouchsafed me some relief from suffering. You will understand how grateful I am to Him for giving me the power (which no human foresight would have anticipated) to continue this service in some measure every Sunday, for I desire to persevere in my humble ministry until my last breath. It is my life, and I feel that, when I am no longer able to exercise it here, it will be that I shall be called upon to exercise another and a better elsewhere.

Pray to God that He will not withdraw from me the consolation of receiving, each Sunday, the body

and blood of my Saviour, to strengthen my body and soul in Him, and that I may also be able to say a few words of edification and exhortation to my brethren.

Last Sunday, I insisted, briefly, upon our immense privilege in being able to glorify God, which we are not only permitted, but commanded to do. I will add to-day that there is a point of view in which we are especially called upon, and in which we are especially happy in being able to glorify Him.

If, among God's perfections, which we are called upon to exhibit before men, there be one whose manifestation is His especial pleasure, should we not most of all glorify Him by imitating and showing forth in ourselves this particular perfection? Well, what is the especial attribute in which He most of all delights to manifest Himself? Is it not love? Is it not written, "God is love?" God is also just, but we do not find it written that God is justice. God is powerful, but still it is not written, God is power.

There are, however, two of His perfections to which this especial honor is rendered by the beloved apostle leaning upon His Saviour's breast: holiness and love. "God is love," "God is light;" and while in his first Epistle he says once "God is light," he says twice, within the interval of a few verses, "God is love;" as

if to lay more stress upon the latter attribute than upon the former.

If this be the case, dear friends, the way in which we shall glorify God is to show forth in ourselves the love that is in Him, so that in looking upon our manner of life, in hearing us speak, in observing our actions, our suffering, our living, and our dying, all men may admire, not us, but the love of God which is in us.

How can we exhibit the love of God? Jesus Christ has shown it to us. Beyond all else He made manifest this love. He glorified God before all the world, and tenderly constrained all who looked upon Him with faith to say when they saw Him, "What fulness of love is there in God!—because the same who has told us that 'he who hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' is Himself so full of love!" And how did He show it? In every way. Chiefly in suffering for His brethren; first, for their temporal relief, "He went about doing good." The cures which He performed were, however, only the type and image of the true spiritual deliverance which was His mission. In suffering to secure to us our spiritual deliverance, He above all exhibited His love, and this is the highest conception that we can form of the manifestation of the love of God, namely, to suffer for our brethren, especially for the good of their souls.

We can all do the same thing, my dear friends. Not all in the direct and especial manner of the Apostle Paul, for his whole life was consecrated to preaching the Gospel; as he said, "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church." We need not seek any very exact and precise explanation of these words. There is an infinite charity and depth of love in them which cannot be rendered by any human definitions. The necessity of imitating his Saviour was the feeling which pervaded his whole life, "Leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps;" as his Saviour suffered for men to save them, St. Paul felt the need of suffering for his brethren—not to save them—for none have declared more explicitly than he the utter powerlessness of man or of creature to save—but to labor for their salvation, "for, in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

But even if we do not, like St. Paul, suffer directly for the service of God and the good of mankind, there is no suffering which we endure to which we cannot communicate a like character by the spirit in which we bear it. "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator."

If we study to turn all the afflictions which it may

please God to send us, whether of spirit, soul, or body, to the good of mankind, to their temporal, but especially their spiritual good, we shall have reached the end for which God visited us with them.

As a general rule, my beloved friends, the more we love, the more we advance in spiritual communion with God and with each other, the more we shall grow to be like Him.

Let us, then, each one of us, show ourselves in the world as a reflection, as it were, of the divine Love. Let all our words and works, our most secret thoughts and prayers, breathe that love which God has revealed to us in Jesus Christ, so that men be forced to say, "God is love indeed!"

VIII.

FAITH.

(October 2, 1855.)

HEBREWS X. 32–39: "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

FAITH, the subject of the verses just read to us and of the admirable chapter following; faith, of which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is an image at once so simple and so profound; this faith, my friends, is our only power, and our only peace. It is nothing

less than the power of God placed at the disposal of man. In the eleventh chapter, St. Paul sums up in faith alone all gifts, not only of sanctification, but of prophecy and of miracles. He does not say that Moses was enabled to pass through the Red Sea because endued with supernatural power, but he says it was because he believed. He does not say that it was supernatural power which enabled Abraham to do the mighty things which he did, but he says it was because he believed.

Hence we note, with admiration, that the Holy Spirit explains all the mighty works of the saints by an interior and entirely spiritual principle; and, further, by a principle accessible to all.

If, then, even in the case of Moses and Abraham, faith alone is brought to our notice, we see that each one of us, by the same faith, may be rendered capable of performing the work placed before us by God, even as they performed the works which God gave them to do.

Works vary; but the principle upon which God accomplishes them in each individual is the same: it is one, it is divine, it is all-powerful.

Let us not be astonished at this. At the first blush it does seem very astonishing that the simple fact of God's hearing and answering our prayer can accom-

plish such marvels, and, in truth, the will of God, realized in the humblest Christian, is no less a wonder than the passage of the Red Sea, or any other miracle which has been performed.

After a moment's reflection, however, we can comprehend the power of faith from its nature. What a marvel it is that we—you and I—placed in the midst of this sin-steeped world, appealed to by the testimony of our eyes, our senses, our own will, by examples, and, in fine, by the evidence of all our organs—what a marvel that we are able to give the lie to all this evidence, and able, against hope, against experience, against the irresistible testimony of our own sight, to believe a single word, one little word that God has told us! You remember Luther's line: "Eir Wörtlein kann ihn fällen" (one little word can make him fall). If this little word of God, penetrating into our hearts, be faith, then it is not astonishing that faith should be all-powerful, because it is not astonishing that God should do all that He wills to do.

How are we to acquire this faith—this faith, so grand in its effects and so prodigious in its nature that it can only be a creation of God in our souls? Why, a man who believes is a more astounding thing than the creation of a new world by the hand of God. How can we acquire it? By asking for it. God gives it to

him who asks. But here, my friends, we must take care. We might think this is a very easy and convenient thing, that, when we feel the need of faith, all we have to do is to address a prayer to God, and receive it. Ah, no! The gifts of God are not to be had so cheaply. Sometimes, certainly, it does please Him to show His power, and create a new man all at once, in answer to a single prayer, but that is not the ordinary way of His Providence.

Faith, although granted in answer to prayer, is the result of long and laborious effort, and it well deserves it. God wills that we strive that we may obtain.

Adams, in his "*Pensées*," says very truly, "Prayer is the easiest of all works; but the prayer of faith, the hardest."

We must fall often upon our knees, must repeat our prayers again and again, and thus show to God that we feel the value of faith. We must exercise it, too, as well as pray for it. We shall gain a little by a first prayer, and this will encourage us to pray more, and with increased fervor, and so we shall receive more and more. This is the only way in which we can succeed. To increase our faith, we have to do three things: to pray for it, to put it in action, and to observe its results, as exemplified in the great saints of old, by a profound and earnest study of Scripture. We need

not hope to receive any gift from God, if we do not feel and appreciate its worth.

And now, in few words, I desire to make this application of what has been said. We must treasure up a supply of faith for the future. We must labor to-day for the faith we shall need five, ten, or twenty years hence. Lay up this spiritual store, day by day, that, being surrounded by the most abundant gifts of God, you have only to open your eyes and reach out your hands when the time comes that your strength fails you even to pray; when the fainting spirit and the weary body become incapable of the terrible struggle of which faith is the recompense and the reward. Ah! do not wait for your last moments to obtain faith. We can find it always, but let us apply ourselves in advance to providing for our last moments, by laying up and always adding to our store, increasing in faith day by day.

My friends, I am in a position where nothing is of any value to me but faith. As our brother said in his prayer, faith gives us power and peace and joy. It is very easy, alas! to say and to preach, before the moment of trial, that faith must triumph over all: but when the struggle comes, face to face with the enemy; when it is a question of gaining or losing all; when it comes to following Jesus Christ, first in the morning

to the desert, then in the evening to Gethsemane, and then in the afternoon to Golgotha, we feel that it is a serious matter.

God be praised, eternally praised! You would understand me very ill, if you thought, because I speak in this way, that God does not support and succor me. He does so, admirably. But I want you to know beforehand that the struggle is hard—much harder than I thought before I passed through it—in order that you may do the same as I have done in my small measure; but I wish now that I had done much more.

May you increase day by day in faith, and only live that you may increase in faith! May you be, before God, men of faith and prayer, preparing yourselves, by doing His will to-day, to do His will tomorrow.

Ah! how greatly my sufferings would be sweetened, how greatly they are sweetened, by the thought that they are made useful to you, by the thought that the words I address you in my infirmity penetrate your hearts by the Holy Spirit! Oh, my friends, little handful of men that we are here, if we were only men of faith, there would be many an eleventh chapter to the Hebrews to write, without leaving this "upper room!"

IX.

JESUS CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE IN SUFFERING.

(December 9, 1855.)

In the presence of Jesus Christ, who feeds us with His flesh and blood, and nourishes us continually by faith, I have it at heart to address a few words to those who suffer. I feel very sure that, however small my audience, my words will fall upon soil prepared to receive them, for we all suffer, and those who suffer the most are not always those who seem to suffer the most. There are pain and sorrow known to God and unknown to men; and, in every condition of life, every creature that feels, that thinks, and that believes, knows profoundly what it is to suffer.

There is something very antagonistic to our nature in pain, and it is very difficult to accustom ourselves to it, for it seems to us as though we ought to be always happy. This feeling is quite legitimate, and does

honor to the goodness of our Creator. It is perfectly true that we ought to be entirely exempt from pain, and always filled with joy. But sin has deranged all this, and now what was contrary to our nature has become natural. It enters now into God's plan for us, and has become our constant habit, as well as our eternal interest, that, in different ways, we should all suffer. You know how Job sums up and classifies the principal trials of life: loss of property, loss of those near and dear to us, and, last of all, loss of health. This is rather Satan's arrangement of trials, and he thoroughly understands the art of temptation. If our hearts at this moment were to be all opened, what a list of sufferings should we have to pour out before God!

Well, dear friends, I should have absolutely nothing to say to console you, were it not for the Word of God. There is no consolation in Nature Nature neither understands nor explains any thing, holds out no hope, no expectation. All natural hope and expectation are futile and vain. But I have abundance to tell you when I contemplate the cross of Jesus Christ, around which we are assembled to celebrate the memory of His sacrifice. We are purified from our sins by His blood—understand it well—purified from our sins by His blood, redeemed by His bitter sacrifice, our sins expiated by His cross, in the simplest and most popu-

lar sense, as well as in the most profound, Jesus being the propitiatory victim reconciling us to God by His death.

This is the very groundwork and core of the Gospel, and, without it, the Gospel would be blotted out and powerless.

Under the cross, the aspect of pain changes completely, and the change is in proportion to our faith. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has appeared in the world. And how? As a man of joy? No, as a man of sorrows. Here is a prodigy, astounding and unnatural! The Son of God appeared upon earth, not only as a sufferer, but as enduring misery so intense that no human being can conceive of it. The cross of Jesus is the very centre and sum of all suffering, absorbing all into itself. There is no pain or sorrow which is not a part of what He suffered there, none that His cross does not explain.

My dear friends, when we remember that Christ suffered for us, and consider that suffering forms a feature of resemblance in us with our Saviour—when, in view of the infinite character of His sufferings, we reflect that, the more we suffer, the closer becomes our resemblance to Him, is it not true that the aspect of pain is changed? Does not the thought that He has borne it before we have, that even He could not be

spared, bring light and sweetness? What sufferer, however depressed in spirit he may be, is not borne up by the thought: "It is like my Saviour; it is a point of resemblance between Him and me; now I know that I belong to Him, that He is calling me, and I begin to enter into God's views, and to understand His ways; I unite my cross to His cross, my sufferings to His sufferings?" In this view St. Paul writes: "For whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." He desires us "to be conformed to the image of His Son;" and the context shows that the conformity is to be essentially a conformity in suffering.

This, then, is the first thought which is powerful to cheer us. Sorrow is an essential part of the life of Jesus Christ, and therefore a point of resemblance between Him and us.

And, now, here is another. Why did Jesus Christ suffer? To expiate sin. In suffering, then, we recognize the just consequence of sin. We cannot bear all that our Saviour endured, but we shall be happy to bear our part, looking upon it as a just punishment.

"Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." These words of St. Peter show us that, in order to be freed from sin, we must suffer. It is necessary that sin and suffering be brought face to face in our own persons, and that suffering be made the agent to destroy the sin in us—not to be an expiation for sin, Christ alone is the expiation for sin—but that we may learn to associate pain and sorrow with sin, and joy with our sanctification and deliverance. The thought, then, that suffering is the fruit of sin, is a consoling thought, and calculated to buoy us up in our trials, because it shows us pain and suffering as a simple natural dispensation—a path in which we must walk—a trial which we cannot and ought not to be spared.

Lastly, why did Jesus Christ suffer in expiation of sin? To save us, and make us partakers of eternal glory, by His love. This is the leading thought in the contemplation of our Saviour's sufferings.

In the same way, then, we should suffer in love, and not in selfishness. We should not think of ourselves, but of God first of all, to glorify Him; and then of our neighbor, to do him good. Christian suffering con-

tains treasures of love, and of the power of love, in the example that a Christian can show in afflictions, and in the patience which God gives him to bear them. What a sweet, heavenly thought that, in suffering, we can be of use to our fellow-men, especially to our brethren! How otherwise can our sufferings so nearly approach those of our Saviour? St. Paul expresses the same idea in a passage I am fond of quoting: "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church."

I do not enter upon the explanation of this passage, for it presents difficulties. Assuredly St. Paul meant nothing less than suffering in expiation for sin, but he unites his sufferings to those of his Saviour. Because He suffered to save humanity, St. Paul suffers for the good of humanity; as he wrote to Timothy: "In doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

See, then, the Christian's stay and comfort in suffering. *Christ has suffered:* the more I suffer, the more I resemble Him, and pain becomes a privilege. Christ has suffered *for sin:* pain is therefore a fruit of sin, wholesome and necessary. Lastly, Christ has suffered *to save:* therefore I also ought to suffer for the good of others, and to lead souls captive to the obedience of the cross.

Let all who suffer endeavor to forget themselves, not to give way to a selfish grief, without faith, without love, and which brings no consolation. Let them enter fully into the love of Christ, that their trials also may be as a cross planted upon the earth, whose shadow may be the refuge of all around them—not to give them eternal life, but to point out the way which leads to it, for the glory of God. To Him be glory for ever and ever!

Let us rejoice in Him, and persuade ourselves well that, by the power of faith and of love, there is no pain, no suffering, which we cannot bear peacefully, and even happily; which we cannot make to conduce to the glory of God, to the welfare of man, and so greatly to our own consolation, that in heaven we shall consider it a great privilege to have suffered much here, under the cross of Jesus! Amen.

X.

SIN.

(December 16, 1855.)

My dear friends, the Holy Communion brings to our minds the remembrance of the deepest joy[1] ever felt. But we must not forget that, even as Christ's path to glory and to the resurrection was the way of the cross, this joy can be the experience of those only who have begun by feeling the bitterness of sin; and that, in proportion as we have felt the bitterness of sin, will be also our sense of this joy.

Oh, my friends, what is sin? Which one of us comprehends all the crime and bitterness existing in our midst, the fearful judgments that follow naturally in their train, and the absolute necessity of our being

[1] "Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Hebrews xii. 2.

thoroughly washed and delivered from them before we can enjoy one moment's peace!

It seems to me that to meditate upon the depth and enormity of sin is the peculiar province of those who are especially called upon to suffer, and to ponder constantly over the mystery, that a God full of love should visit His children with suffering upon suffering.

Take, for example, sucha man as François Gonthier, of Nyon. I have never known a person who, as far as human judgment can determine, was more advanced in true and thorough Christian piety, uniting purity of faith with the spirit of humility and charity. And yet, this man, on whom one would think God would lavish every comfort and consolation, was visited, to the full, with all His most bitter dispensations.

He lost successively an only son, a tenderly-loved wife, and a daughter, twelve years old, his last remaining link with his lost treasures. Left alone, the hand of God made his loneliness still more lonely, by taking from him a dearly-loved sister, and afterward a niece twenty years of age, on whom he had concentrated all his affection. He lost others besides, whom I do not mention. Add to this a state of health so seriously affected that he said to me, one day, "Do you know how I write my books? Just as one would take the juice from an orange, by pressing it out slowly, drop

after drop." He was afflicted with exceeding weakness, and suffered almost continual pain, and, as both pain and weakness constantly increased, his sufferings became greater and greater until the end of his life.

When I reflect upon an existence like this, I say to myself, "What is sin?" It may be said, I know well, that such a man is stricken for the good of the Church, for the sake of the instruction afforded by his patience and cheerfulness in enduring affliction, and this assuredly forms his greatest consolation, because establishing in him a resemblance to our Saviour.

But God would not have heaped all these miseries upon a Gonthier, simply for the sake of other men's good. We must not confound the creature with the Creator. God would, in that case, be making *man* a Saviour. He caused Jesus Christ to suffer for the sins of mankind, but in our case He never inflicts any measure of suffering upon us which our own personal sins have not deserved. Our sins deserve far greater punishment than we have ever borne, far more suffering than we can even conceive of.

This is the teaching of the Scriptures, and particularly of the Psalms, at every page. David cannot approach the subject of his afflictions without gliding, as it were, imperceptibly and unconsciously into that of his sins. You will notice it particularly in the thirty-

eighth Psalm, where he so mingles his sufferings and his sins together that one hardly knows how to distinguish them.

What, then, is sin? What is the horror which it presents to the eyes of God? What is the punishment that it renders necessary? and what is the ransom which alone can atone for it?

Look at sin in an ordinary Christian—in one who, though never having reached the high standard of a Gonthier's Christian life, pursues nevertheless a respectable career, without dishonoring his Christian profession, but has never felt all the bitterness of sin. He has his afflictions, because we all must; but he has not known how to convert them into a cross, nor to mingle his sufferings with those of his Saviour. Look at the heart of such a Christian—who may nevertheless be a sincere man—and see what a mass of latent sin, of hidden corruption, of secret infection, is lurking there. If that heart were to be suddenly laid open before us, what frightful horror it would cause us! if indeed we have the capacity of feeling horror of sin, that is, the power to recognize the perfect holiness of God's law, and all the holiness that this terrible law requires of us.

Then look at sin in men of the world, men steeped in sin; since they were born they have done nothing

else than drink it like water, and breathe it in like air; who are entirely formed and composed of sin, and enveloped, spiritually, with an outside crust of it, which no ray of life-giving, health-giving, sanctifying light has ever penetrated! What an abyss! what a sepulchre! what a spectacle before the eyes of God! Thousands and millions of men scattered over the face of the earth in whom there is nothing else than this frightful sin, of which they have no consciousness even, other than, at most, a vague feeling which God sends them from time to time, to urge them to repentance, and they remain sunk in this fearful state, so abominable in the eyes of God!

Sin in the very best of Christians, sin in ordinary Christians, sin in the Church, sin in the world! Oh, my friends, what wretchedness, what misery! What a fearful thing is sin!

This is what Jesus Christ saw when He descended from heaven to save us. We did not know it, but He knew it. We did not feel it, but He felt it for us, and this gave Him strength to endure the torture of the cross, the anguish of Gethsemane, the struggles of the desert, and all the trials and humiliations that went before and made up His entire life.

The sufferings, then, which He has borne for us determine the measure of His estimate of sin; of

the depth of the abyss from which He has raised us. None of us, no, my friends, not one of us, has the slightest idea of what sin is! We cannot know what sin is, because we cannot fully know our Saviour, nor His sufferings, nor His love.

Oh, my friends, in the presence of this broken body, and of this shed blood, let us learn what sin is, and the peril of our souls, that we may take refuge in Jesus, and seek only in Him that which He alone can give! Let it sink well into our hearts that we shall never learn it otherwise than from Holy Scripture. Our own meditations will never reveal to us what sin is.

Here I particularly feel the necessity for, and the reality of, the inspiration and the divine authority of the Scriptures. We should never have learned to know what sin is otherwise than by obedience to a superior authority, entirely outside and independent of our own inner feelings. We are doubtless called upon to work, ourselves, in study of this authority, in meditation, and in fervent prayer, but the brilliant truth comes from above, given especially by the Spirit of God, and speaking with the authority of God Himself. For we are called upon to begin by accepting and acting upon a horror of sin, before we are yet capable of feeling it.

My friends, let us cast ourselves into the arms of the Saviour. Do our earthly pains and sufferings hold us back? Have we even time to attend to them, when it is a question of saving our souls? Let us go to Jesus in profound humiliation, but with confidence, without reserve, in Him who has done all and suffered all for us. Oh, the infinite sweetness of perfect rest at the foot of His cross! I begin to perceive the depth of my misery and wretchedness, but I embrace the cross of my Saviour, and I want nothing else; grace and justice from the cross alone; no admixture of my own works. My own works! They could only condemn me; but purchased by Him, and washed in His blood who has expiated my sins, I cling to the cross, and find my only support in my Saviour's sacrifice.

Let us talk, then, of the Saviour to those who do not know Him. Having so terrible a disease, differing from all earthly diseases, in being the only one which is really evil—the principle, indeed, of all evil—and with such a remedy in our hands, as we have, differing from all earthly remedies, in that it is alone sure and infallible, how can we pass through life, mingle in society, dwell in our families, among our neighbors and friends, without talking to them of sin and of Jesus Christ, who is their Saviour and ours?

Let us seize hold upon the cross, let us proclaim

the cross. Let us die embracing it, let us die proclaiming it, and our death will be the beginning of life; and God will be glorified in us, whether by our life or by our death, and, above all, by the blood and the redemption of the Lamb of God. This is what I ask of God for each one of you, as I ask it for myself, in the love of Christ, which I beseech Him to increase in us. Amen.

XI.

THE CROSS REVEALING TO US THE LOVE OF GOD.

(December 23, 1855.)

PSALM LXXXVIII: "O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before Thee: Let my prayer come before Thee: incline Thine ear unto my cry; for my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength: Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from Thy hand. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves. Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; Thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth. Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon Thee, I have stretched out my hands unto Thee. Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Shall Thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or Thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? But unto Thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent Thee. Lord, why castest Thou off my soul? why hidest Thou Thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer Thy terrors I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; Thy terrors have

cut me off. They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together. Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness."

My good friends, you give me a very touching proof of your fraternal sympathy and affection in coming to partake, with me, of the Supper of our Lord, which every week nourishes and strengthens my spirit and my body.

There is a feature in the eighty-eighth Psalm, read to us at the beginning of our service, peculiar to this Psalm, and found in no other. It is the only one which is all sorrow and sadness, which does not conclude with one word, one gleam of consolation. It is all black, all dark, and one must look very closely to find even a germ of hope in the name given to God in the first verse: "Lord God of my salvation." Why this astounding mystery? I think there are two explanations: First, God wishes to show us that, although in His habitual mercy we never cry to Him without finding relief, although often a few verses only separate the most fearful anguish from the most abundant consolation (as in the thirteenth Psalm, for example), it may nevertheless sometimes enter into our Lord's views to let us cry, for a certain time, without response and without consolation, without even His sending us the smallest ray of light to relieve our

distress. Then it is that we must live by faith alone, and, with Jeremiah, David, and all other saints who have been tried in this manner, we must wait; we must ask Him why He conceals Himself, and, in spite of the cloud which hides Him from our view, we must never doubt Him.

This *one* Psalm alone, out of the whole hundred and fifty, teaches us this lesson. It is as if it were painful to our Lord's love to give us this warning.

But there is a second explanation, attaching itself, however, to the first. You know that the Psalms are full of the Messiah. It is Christ who speaks, who tells of His sorrows. We find here—Psalm lxxxviii.—the same Saviour who, in Psalm xxii., utters the words "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani—my God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me!" and, almost immediately following, we find: "But Thou art holy," and "They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them." This Psalm thus shows us that the Saviour experienced an amount of distress far surpassing any thing which man, even the most severely-tried servants of God, can feel or even conceive of.

And why is this? Because "God is love." Strange reply, but true. God is love. My dear friends, however abundantly we may be blessed with the gifts of God, temporal and spiritual, of every kind—with His

Word, His promises, and all else—there is something wanting, if one dare say so, in God's love, to enable it to find the road to our hearts. This something is suffering. We know that God cannot suffer; that He is exalted far above all pain, as above all earthly temptations and anguish; so it was necessary, to make us understand the love of God in its fulness and reality, that He should present Himself to us in such a way as to be able to prove His love to us by His suffering; since man would never have been persuaded, or rather gained over, in any other manner.

Jesus Christ, then, the Son of God, and God Himself, became man, in order to be able to suffer, and thus show us His love in a light and with a force strong enough to break even the hardest hearts, if they reflect ever so little. Jesus came upon earth to suffer. And how thoroughly He performed His task! He began by clothing Himself with flesh like that of our sinful bodies. Can one conceive of such a depth of degradation, self-renunciation, and sacrifice, for the Lord of Glory, the Prince of Life, to descend to the wretchedness and misery of our poor nature, to accept all its humiliations, even unto the grave? "Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made

in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Remark that what distinguishes the sufferings and sacrifice of Jesus Christ from our own is, that He chose them voluntarily, that He asked for them. Nothing obliged Him to the course He pursued. He chose and sought out His sufferings one after the other, to accomplish the will of His Father, but He did it of His own free-will.

And why? For us, because He could not bear the thought of the eternal misery to which sin had condemned us. What love, my God, what love!

I pass rapidly over His whole earlier career of suffering and humiliation, and come at once to Gethsemane. In the middle of the night you enter the garden of olive-trees, and see a man lying on the ground, with his face toward the earth; he is weeping, crying aloud; you take him perhaps for a madman. It is your Saviour! By His very posture, by His prayers, by His tender reproaches to His disciples, you can measure the immensity of His suffering—an anguish we are no more capable of understanding than we are able to conceive of God or of infinity; for it is not only an outward physical suffering, but a spiritual suffering of which we can form no idea.

Not saints alone, but men who have never known the Lord, have borne patiently the most frightful tortures; but in Jesus, besides His infinite suffering, there was a secret, inner anguish into which we can never penetrate—the anguish of bearing alone, before the Holy God, the burden of our sins; He innocent for us guilty; the anguish of feeling Himself (though I hardly dare to speak of this mystery) for a moment separated, by our sins, from the love of the Father, if one can say so, although at the same time one with Him, and constrained to cry: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

And why does He suffer thus? For thee, sinner, for thee. So dearly did He love thee, that, wert thou the only one on earth to be saved, for thee alone would He have entered the garden of Gethsemane. What love, my God, what love!

Lastly, look upon the cross. I will not dwell upon this subject, had I even the strength. How can I describe so great a mystery? With you, I stand at the foot of the cross, and watch the sufferings of my Saviour. I call your attention to one thing: in the very moment when He is given up to the most cruel anguish, to a frightful agony of which man can never know, nor conceive, no, nor even ever gain the faintest glimpse, in that very moment He overcomes His pain

and suffering to glorify God and to save man, even unto the end. From the very depths of His death-agony, we hear, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"—"Woman, behold thy son"—"Disciple, behold thy mother." What love, my God, what love!

Last Sunday, at the foot of the cross, we were contemplating the view we have there, of the horror, the enormity, and the terrors of sin. How sweet it is, to-day, in contemplating the sufferings of our Saviour, to gaze upon the view which they present to us of the grandeur and incomprehensible depth of the mercy of God!

Oh, my friends! let us always keep His love before our eyes, and all will be explained to us, even the most cruel sufferings; for they are, in His people, only the consequences of what He Himself has suffered. At the same time, all becomes sweet and easy to us. Faith makes every thing possible, and love makes every thing easy. "His commandments are not grievous."

Filled, then, with this image of our Saviour's love, and of the love of God as revealed in Him, reading in the father-heart of God His love for us, we shall devote ourselves to the Lord, to do and to suffer all that He may see fit to ordain for us. Ask of God to be deeply

penetrated with the thought, "God is love," and, in order to this, let us cling to the foot of our Saviour's cross and never lose hold or sight of it, until, after having let us suffer a little—since this is necessary—He takes us by the hand, leads us through the dark interval between Friday and Sunday morning, raises us up again with Himself, and establishes us with Him, in His home of glory, where He awaits us, where we shall bless Him for evermore, in proportion as we have suffered here, especially if our suffering has been for His name. Amen.

XII.

THE INVISIBLE THINGS OF GOD.

(December 30, 1855.)

Revelation xxii.: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he

that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they who do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

The chapter just read to us would suffice alone to fill our hearts with strength and joy forever, if we could receive its truths with perfect simplicity of faith. If a man, crushed by poverty, were assured that he would make his fortune to-morrow; or one, borne down by suffering, that to-morrow he would enter upon a new life of comfort, would he not find strength to wait a few hours, and, cheered by his hope, would he not overstep the short space of time which might still separate him from happiness?

And we too, my friends, if we had a sure and simple faith, a clear view of that eternal happiness so

beautifully and touchingly depicted in the last chapter of the Revelation, should not we also say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" and should we not say it in perfect peace? What more do we want than God has given us? Nothing but what He can give us still—simple faith in the "invisible things." We are living for time; all we have to do is, to live for eternity. We are constantly enchained by the visible things of earth; all we have to do is, to enter into communion with the "invisible things of God." I say, all we have to do: but it is a great deal to do, an immense change to make. For sin does not only consist in the grosser forms of disobedience to the divine law prevalent in the world, but in far more deep and subtle guise; incredulity and the enticements of visible things constitute sin, and form indeed its very source.

As God is invisible, and the soul and centre of things invisible, it is only because we are by nature far from God, that we require so great an effort to feed ourselves upon invisible things. It is the characteristic of the Word of God, that it lives and moves in the midst of the invisible, and this alone, to the thinking man, is proof enough of its divine inspiration. It is not given to man, the slave by his fallen nature of visible things, to raise himself out of, and above them, namely, to rise out of himself, to the level of the invis-

ible things, and to speak from out their midst as the Word of God does. Man cannot speak as Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, speaks, who, dwelling in heaven, speaks of heaven; nor as the organs divinely appointed to transmit to us the Word of God speak to us; for the Word, being full of God, although upon earth, speaks from heaven by that prodigy of God's grace called by us Inspiration, which constitutes its divine authority—that pure and holy book, the book of God, so far above us and above the world, which tells us of another world, and speaks to us out of the midst of that other world!

How are we to be brought into communication with the invisible things? Here we all feel our need and our infirmity: but let us feel what our strength would be, our happiness, our peace, and our joy, if, like the Word of God, like Jesus Christ, we could live and move in the midst of the invisible; if, by the power of faith, we could, in advance, be transported into God, and into the things of God, and see them as He sees them; if we were able to measure them by His standard, to appreciate them as He does, and to judge them as He judges them! "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged," are words we have heard to-day, and His words.

As we have seen, then, the first means of putting

ourselves in communication with the invisible things is, to live with the Holy Scriptures, the word and testimony of God. By *living* with them, I do not only mean reading them daily, and accepting their testimony, but we must feed upon them, seek in them the bread of life which came down from heaven, seek in them the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the living bread which gives life to the world, whose flesh has been torn and lacerated for you, for me, for us all. We must receive it in faith, particularly in the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, which places the object of our faith so vividly before our eyes.

We must feed upon the Word of God, my dear friends, must live with it constantly, day and night. Let it be to us what it was to the author of the hundred-and-nineteenth Psalm, out of whose hundred and seventy-six verses there are only two or three in which the Word of God is not mentioned by one of the innumerable names given to it by the Psalmist. Ah! let us live with the Word of God! Let us surround ourselves constantly with the atmosphere of the Scriptures, for it is the atmosphere of heaven and of God Himself!

And, to put ourselves into communion with the invisible things, let us pray without ceasing. Yes, pray: but how? Pray, O my God, as if we saw Thee, as if

speaking with Thee and listening to Thee, feeling Thy presence,. and delighting in Thy Word. Who will teach us to pray, if not Thou, O God of prayer? Pardon, my God, the prayers of Thy Church—Thy Church, which alone in the world knows how to pray. Pardon the way in which we pray ourselves, our languor, our uncertainty, our incredulity, even in the best, the least unfaithful, the least unbelieving moments of our Christian life and our Christian ministry! Pardon, O God, the sinfulness of our holy offerings! Ah! if by prayer we could, at this moment, clear the space that separates us from Thee! If we could pray as Jesus prayed! as Moses, David, St. Paul, St. John! if we could pray—really pray—earnestly pray—as St. James said, speaking of Elias, "he prayed earnestly!" We pray, alas! for the most part, without praying! We have no idea of the weakness and unbelief which mingle with our prayers, because we do not live among the invisible things; nor have we any idea of the amount of grace and blessings of which we thereby deprive ourselves. Oh! my friends, let us constantly repeat the prayer, "Lord, teach us to pray!" When we know how to pray, we shall know all, and, what is better, we shall have all. We shall know Jesus Christ, and, better than knowing Him, we shall possess Him; for we cannot know Him until we possess Him, and, in

possessing Him, we know Him; knowing, we love Him, and by faith triumph with Him over all visible things, and crush Satan under our feet. May the God of peace Himself crush Satan under our feet!

My friends, the invisible things of God! the things of the last chapter of the Revelation! . . . We shall soon appear before God—not only those who are awaiting their summons, day by day; who are more especially warned by their Lord to hold themselves in readiness, and who rejoice, yea! ardently long for the moment when Jesus will say to them, "Come!"—but it is equally true for us all. None of us can be sure that he will live until the evening.

Now, while you have the free use of all your faculties, now is the time to put yourselves in communication with the invisible things, by means of the Word of God, and by prayer. These are very old things that I am telling you, but, alas! our incredulity and want of fervor make them very new things!

Seek the invisible things. Seek God Himself, enthroned in the midst of the invisible world, through Jesus Christ, who has opened it for us by the veil, that is to say, His broken body, and whose love and whose sufferings form the measure of the joy which He has prepared for us. "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

XIII.

THE MAN OF SORROWS AND MEN OF SORROWS.

(January 6, 1856.)

The Christian in affliction is directly called by God to meditate upon the place which affliction occupies in the plans of the divine redemption, in the development of the kingdom of God on earth, and in the revelation of the Holy Scriptures. It is then that he understands the words, at once so simple and so profound: "Think it not strange, as though some strange thing happened unto you." It would be strange indeed if we could be matured for eternal life without afflictions; and, more particularly, if a servant of God could see himself blessed in his labors, I do not merely say without afflictions, but without a large measure of afflictions: "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." This doctrine is clearly

shown us, in the first place, in Him whose sacrifice we are now celebrating, since it is to His sorrows and His sacrifice alone that we owe our eternal life. The Saviour was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" not only a man of sorrows, but *the* man of sorrows upon whom all sorrows, of all kinds, were heaped; such suffering as it will never be in the power of man to endure, nor even to conceive of. Like the master, so also were the disciples; and—to speak more especially of those His inspired organs, in whom He was more particularly manifested, and, so to say, reproduced—the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ formed a long succession of men of sorrows, from Abel down to St. Paul and St. John. We are not sufficiently struck by this, after a superficial study of Scripture, but, on looking somewhat deeper into the Word of God, it becomes more and more striking.

The Apostles and Prophets are presented to us everywhere in Scripture as men of sorrows; of sorrows, too, greater that we know or perceive, as Holy Writ gives us rather glimpses of them only, than shows them to us with clearness; for if we were to be instructed in all the sufferings of the men of God, it would be necessary to recount to us in detail the whole history of their lives.

First, the Apostles: There is only one whose life

has been handed down to us with some minuteness, a man whose ministry God defined as one of sorrows, for He said, when He called Him: "I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake." If we follow St. Paul's career, we find his life, from the beginning to the end, only a series of inward and outward sufferings. Hear what he says himself, in the last verses of the eleventh chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians:

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils amongst false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?"

Weigh every detail separately. What a picture!

What a life, inwardly and outwardly! You see the measure of his love in the measure of his sufferings.

And now of the prophets: St. James says, "Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience." If we study the lives of the prophets with some attention, of those particularly whose history we know rather less imperfectly than we do that of the others, we shall find this assertion exactly verified. Jeremiah, for instance, one of those of whom we know some little. But, of all the prophets, the best known to us is David; his history is told us with more minuteness of detail than that of any other. Have you ever reflected upon the sorrows and sufferings which filled up David's life? If you take his life as described in the first and second books of Samuel, and in the books of Kings also, and Chronicles, you will know nothing about him. There you see David in the beginning of his life, pursued by Saul. He had numerous enemies, but, after all, he triumphed over Saul and achieved great glory. Next, you see him in deep affliction, stricken in the bosom of his family, by the just consequence of his sins; but at the same time abundantly consoled and supported by God, who, even in His most dreadful chastisements, remembers His promises to David, and His great mercy to him. We

find much trial and agitation in his life, but this does not give us an adequate idea of his sufferings. We must read the Psalms, to learn of these. The Psalms reveal to us the inner life of David, and, in so doing, show us, in some sort, the inner man of all the prophets of God. Well, the Psalms are all crowded with expressions of unheard-of sorrow. David speaks in them unceasingly of his ills, his diseases, and of his enemies without number. It is hard indeed to understand who or what he means by the enemies of whom he so constantly complains, but his Psalms lay bare to us an amount of inward sorrow which we should never have suspected if his history were all that we knew of him. To reveal him in this light is one of the chief objects of the Psalms. Read the thirty-eighth, and ponder every word of it:

"O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy wrath; neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are

filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me. My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off. They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long. But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope. Thou wilt hear, O Lord my God. For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me. For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is. Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation."

Assailed by innumerable enemies, crushed by consciousness of his sin, and afflicted with a complication of maladies; his eyes diseased, their sight gone, his loins inflamed, his body bent so that he can hardly walk; his sores running and exhaling fetid humors—so he represents himself in this Psalm, and, if you read the sixth or the sixty-ninth or many others, you will find him in like affliction. Truly is he a man overwhelmed with sorrow. We may not say that, because David was a type of Jesus Christ, these sufferings apply to the Messiah. Doubtless his afflictions were a type of those of the Messiah, and were so only because they were afflictions; it is precisely because David was a man of sorrows, that he was a type of The Man of sorrows.

But, dear friends, shall we stop here? After having seen that the apostles and prophets were men of sorrows, shall we go no further than to dwell in sadness upon their sufferings? They were not only men of sorrows, but men who conquered their sorrows and made them redound to the glory of God. Jesus Christ, at the head of His own, triumphs over His suffering and pursues His mission of charity even to the most cruel anguish. In Gethsemane, we hear Him exhorting His disciples and preserving perfect liberty of spirit, in His desire to fulfil, for their good, His minis-

try of love. It was the same upon the cross; He allowed no opportunity to escape Him of giving to His disciples, to the people, to John, Mary, and to all, lessons of eternal life, until the close of His fearful agony. The Man of sorrows triumphed over His sorrows, to accomplish, in and by means of His sorrows, the mission He came to fulfil.

And His disciples in the same way, and the same with the apostles. What use does St. Paul make of his afflictions? He consecrates them all to the glory of God. He is not crushed and overwhelmed by his sufferings, as we so easily are, but triumphs over them, by the love of Christ, and, with marvellous faithfulness, makes them all tend to the advancement of the kingdom of God.

David, too, upon whom I have more particularly dwelt, have you not noticed how he triumphs over his sufferings, to do his work? The chief mission which David received from God was the composition of Psalms for all generations of the Church, and these, or a large portion of them, he composes in the midst of the most cruel suffering. Imagine yourself, crushed down by physical, moral, and spiritual pain, called upon to compose a Psalm; and yet from out all these sufferings spring forth at the moment, even when they are such as David describes in the thirty-eighth Psalm,

hymns to the glory of God and for the instruction of the Church. What triumph for David over himself, and what a humiliation for us, who in our weakness are, for the most part, obliged to wait until our pains have passed away, before we or others can reap the fruit of them! But David writes his Psalms in the very moments of his pain and sorrow. His thirty-eighth Psalm was written while he was suffering persecution, inward torment, and the bitterness of sin. I know it may be said that this Psalm was written in cold blood; that David may have carried himself back into trial and affliction that had passed away, as the poet transports himself in imagination into suffering and trials which he has never endured. But no, this supposition is as repugnant to you as it is to me. It was in the furnace, from the midst of the glowing furnace of affliction itself, that he wrote these lines, which were to serve for the encouragement of the Church in all ages.

Oh, wondrous power of the love of Christ! What renunciation of selfish will! oh, the grace of the true servant of God! oh, the courage of the apostle and the prophet! the virtue of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in them! For never could man attain to such force of will, to such a triumph over the flesh!

My dear friends, the application of this subject I

leave to each one of you. It resolves itself into two questions. Are we men of sorrows, and in what measure do we share in the afflictions of Christ? If we have our share in the afflictions of Christ, have we learned to triumph over them and to offer them, by the power of love, to the glory of God, and the welfare of our neighbors and brethren? And do they, at the same time, and all the more on that account, work together for our sanctification, nourish and support us, and lay up for us the treasure of an excellent glory?

XIV.

THE REGRETS OF A DYING MAN.

I.—THE SECRET OF A HOLY, ACTIVE, AND PEACEFUL LIFE.

(January 13, 1856.)

My beloved in the Beloved of the Father, I thank God that He permits me still to speak to you in His name, for your encouragement and for my own consolation; but I have need that you exercise toward me the patience of God, to whom we are pleasing "according to what we have, and not according to what we have not." My declining strength prevents me from either raising or turning myself, so that this is the only position in which I can address you. I hope, however, to be able to speak distinctly enough to be heard by you all.

It is a very striking situation, that of a man who has already lived several months, and will live perhaps some time longer—how long he knows not—with the abiding thought that all his ties to life are broken;

that the hand of God has stricken him incurably and mortally, uncertain at what moment the paternal voice may call him to His bosom. He must be either very insensible, or very unreflecting, and devoid of all Christian feeling, if he does not turn his thoughts backward, and look upon his past life. At the same time, as thoughts of recovery spring up, and ought to spring up, in his mind (since, after all, he is in the hands of God, who raises the dead, and has already raised others more nearly dead than he), he is led to ask himself, "If life were to be restored to me, what use should I make of it?" While he remembers the feebleness and frailty of his resolutions, as proved by his whole past life, he hopes, nevertheless, in the goodness of God, that the visitation may not be lost, in its influence upon a second part of his career and ministry. I say to myself, then: "I would fain do so and so; there is certainly nothing at all that I would not wish to do far otherwise and better than I have done, and there is a certain humiliation, salutary for me, as there may be salutary instruction for you, in dwelling upon the regrets of a dying man, or one who at all events thinks himself such, and figures to himself the new use he would make of life, were it restored to him." It is more particularly in this direction that I propose to occupy your thoughts in these addresses.

To select at once an especial example. Here is a point in which, if I had to begin again, I should desire to make a considerable change in my life—I mean in my inner life. I need not say that the exact applications of the principle I have stated belong only to the Lord; but there are, nevertheless, other applications of a more general character, which, with perfect propriety, may be discussed in a little assemblage like this—prayer, for example, reading the Bible, and Christian liberty.

This point, then, strikes me: I regret that I have regulated my life too much according to my own plans; I mean, according to my own views of faithfulness and Christian sanctification, and not simply enough upon the plan which the Lord unfolds for each one of us, before our eyes. I think it will be easy for me to make my thought clear in few words, so that each child of God can enter into it. We are all of us inclined to form for ourselves a certain ideal of Christian life, Christian activity, and Christian ministry, and to attach to our ideal certain plans and methods of life, and we are not content unless we succeed in realizing them. It is important, then, that our plans be the best possible, and that we seek the best means of carrying them out. This is all very well, no doubt, but there is a defect at the bottom of it. Self is there,

the hidden self, rooted in the depths of the heart, and too clearly showing itself in our best and purest works.

What I would desire to do, on the other hand, would be to form the plan of my life and daily conduct, not after my own ideas and feelings, but according to the commandments of God, to the inner testimonies given us of His will, to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and to the outward direction which He gives to our life.

You will thoroughly understand my idea of the manner in which I should wish to regulate my life, if you consider the manner in which Jesus regulated His. We do not find that He adopted any plan or method, as many good people do, giving themselves much trouble about it, and finding themselves often greatly tormented thereby; losing, besides, much valuable time which might have been better employed. But what do we find? We find in Him (I am considering Him now only as Son of Man) a man whose sole purpose in life is to fulfil the mission received from the Father, and whose only plan of life is to enter into and adopt the Father's plan. His eyes are fixed upon the Father. He occupies Himself merely in listening for His voice, in order to follow His directions; in discerning His Will, in order to execute it. The good works of Jesus Christ are all given to Him, one after

the other, being all placed on His path before Him, by the hand of God. They follow each other so naturally, spring up so easily, each from the other, that they never interfere with each other, even on the busiest days of His ministry. On the day, for instance, described in the ninth chapter of St. Matthew, when He calls one of His Apostles, heals the sick, raises a dead man, and, on His way, cures a woman diseased many years, to say nothing of other blessings showered on all sides around His path, there was no one instant of embarrassment or hesitation, either as to the manner of doing His good works, or as to the time to be bestowed on each, because Jesus Christ merely and simply followed the will of God, and God took upon Himself to lead Him. Where there exists on our part this perfect accordance with the will of God, then He, on His part, shows us His will with perfect clearness for our guidance. Hence we realize the wonderful and profound words of the Holy Spirit: "We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." Good works are presented to us, not as a path that we have to make for ourselves, but as a way that God has made for us, in which we have only to walk. It is God's way, and not our way. We have only to follow this way, and each moment we shall be doing the will of God. If I

have succeeded in making clear to you as well as possible, with so little development of the idea, what I wish I had done, and what I should desire to do if life were restored to me, it will be easy to show how many advantages are offered by this conformity to God's plan for us, over any, even the best, personal plan of our own. I must, however, add that my idea is not to discourage personal plans, which we ought to endeavor to render the best possible. I believe that our infirmity requires their aid, but we must see that they are subordinated to the one general thought of following only the will of God.

To confine myself, then, to two or three leading ideas, this path, of which Jesus Christ has given us the example, is, in the first place, a condition of holiness. What is it that constitutes sin in its subtlest essence? It is self—self-seeking, confidence in self; our own will; justice to self, our own glory, and all else that pertains to ourselves personally. Hence our desires to do good, and even to do our Lord's will, if based upon plans and projects formed by ourselves, partake inevitably, in one way or the other, of the root of sin: while, on the contrary, as the very essence of holiness is the oneness of our will with the Divine will, when we have no other plan than God's plan for us, no other will than His will, then it is that we shall attain to a

true sanctity, not in outward appearance alone, but in real character—a holiness resembling that of Jesus. The holiness of Jesus Christ follows and depends upon the principle I have just laid down, namely, the continual surrender of His will to the will of God alone, manifested within by the testimony of His Spirit, and without by the declarations of His Word and the signs of His Providence. Jesus is holy, because He wills only what God wills; because He seeks not His own glory, but that of the Father: in this lay the power of His holiness.

Conformity to God's plans for us, then, is a condition of holiness.

At the same time it is a condition of active usefulness. We lose time prodigiously, when we search for ourselves, even after good. We consider, and with reason, how easy it is for us to deceive ourselves; we involve ourselves in reflections and considerations infinite in variety. And how many men, at the end of their career, have recognized that a large part of their life has been devoted to forming plans, which would have been far more usefully employed in the work of the present moment, and in the interest of others! You see what activity was imparted to the life of our Lord by His plan, of which I have spoken. In the ninth chapter of St. Matthew, and elsewhere, His good

works are crowded together in handfuls, not upon each other, in confusion, but following each after the other; and there are no limits to the activity of a life founded upon an entire accordance with the will of God. The action of man becomes then divine action, and our life becomes divine life in the midst of a humanity in which something of the power of God is accomplished. We can form no idea of how much we could do, if we were entirely given up to a perfect accordance with the will of God; if we sought no other will than His will; if every word from our mouth, every pulsation of our heart, every thought of our mind, every movement of our spirit or our body, were turned toward Him, waiting, as Samuel did, for His voice: "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Some have shown what man can do. Luther, Calvin, St. Paul, Moses, for example, have shown what man can do, when he seeks the will of God alone. Jesus Christ did much more, because in His case only was there perfect conformity of will to the Divine will.

It is, then, a condition of active usefulness almost limitless; still there are limits, because God never demands from His creatures more than they are able to perform. And, lastly—for I stop here—it is a condition of peace.

There is no peace possible for the man who takes

his career into his own hands. There is always reason to fear that he may deceive himself. He is troubled, and often in error, because human will and human interest are always subject to much error. He can enjoy no repose, but agitates and torments himself, and inspires deep compassion in others, who, seeing how purely he desires to glorify God, see at the same time how he heaps up obstacles in his own path by his want of simplicity.

When, on the other hand, we look to God alone, we cast all our burdens upon Him, and He will sustain us; and, further, if my plans are made trusting only in myself, they may not be practicable. I may wish to follow a career involving expense for which I am not able to provide. I may desire to be a painter, and my sight fail me; an orator, and lose my voice, or a surgeon, and my hand tremble; and so my career is a failure, and I am forever inconsolable. But there would be no such thing as a wrecked career if my projects were formed and carried out according to God's plan in my behalf. The very impossibility, which meets me, of doing that which I had at first proposed to myself, proves to me that that is not what God has called me to do; and the very imfirmities which hinder me are so many lights, by which God reveals to me my true field of labor.

If we act in this spirit (I say it with profound respect), our work becomes God's affair rather than our own; His work, and not ours; and the activity and personal energy, which God requires of us always, consist simply in following Him in faithful obedience and abandonment of self.

Here is profound and perfect peace. God cannot lead us astray. We are often disturbed by the thought that we are not doing enough, or that we are doing wrong, or not doing the work which God has given us to do.

I remember, particularly, the first few weeks after the physicians had pronounced their opinion in my case, how much I was troubled at the thought that my work was not done. By God's grace, I have been freed from this thought, because I have been brought to understand that it is not a question of my work, but God's work; and I recognized, by the very sufferings and afflictions which He has sent me, and by the hope of the eternal life that is to come after, that the Lord has given me another ministry, of more importance, probably, than the one I had proposed to myself, and certainly surer, because coming to me more directly from the hand of God, Who in His mercy compels me to walk in this path, for His service and for His glory.

Then we shall be able to say with the dying Christ.

"I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." Why could He say this? Because He seeks only to do the will of God, and God takes Him, as one gathers ripe fruit, as soon as His mission is accomplished.

In the same way, let us also endeavor to perform the work which our Father has given us to do, and leave ourselves entirely in His hands, and we too, if we are faithful, shall not be taken away until our work is finished. It belongs to God alone to decide when the work is finished which He chooses to do through our agency. Certainly, in the eyes of men, it will be very incomplete and very imperfect, but, if we are right with Him, the Lord will not permit our life to pass without leaving some traces upon earth. He will not take us until our work is done before Him, and we shall be able to say with our Saviour, in a spirit of humility, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." Vinet said it without knowing it, when he gave his last lesson on theology from the words, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do;" and what was accomplished in the case of Vinet was at the same time accomplished in Rochat, and is accomplished in every true servant of God.

There is great peace in seeking our plan of life only from God, and in following it with entire renunciation of self. Otherwise there is no peace.

Let us apply ourselves to look to God alone, to determine the course of our life, those of us who are called to bow in humiliation, and those who live to grow in grace. In this spirit let us apply ourselves to follow Jesus Christ to Gethsemane, and to keep our eyes constantly fixed upon the will of the Father. This will be for us, even as it was for Jesus Christ, a source of holiness, of activity in Christian duty, and of profound peace.

May that peace be with you! I should be very happy to think that these few remarks may have induced some who have still time, life, and strength before them, so to use them, so faithfully and so simply, for the glory of God, after the example of their Saviour, that they, in their turn, may also say: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."

May they pass the rest of their life on earth in perfect peace, until called to the presence of the Father, by the grace of the Lord and by the power and unction of the Holy Ghost!

XV.

THE REGRETS OF A DYING MAN.

II.—THE STUDY OF THE WORD OF GOD.

(January 20, 1856.)

Following out, my dear friends, the order of ideas commenced last Sunday, upon the subject of the "regrets of a dying man," and the new view which he takes of much in his past life, one of the most important points he would wish had been otherwise, and that he would desire to correct, if he were recalled from the half-open door of the tomb, is the manner in which he had studied the Word of God. Ah! he certainly says to himself, then, "How differently I should have acted in regard to the Word of God! I ought to have studied it much more deeply, and acquainted myself with it far more fully, in order the better to be able myself to practise its precepts, and at the same time the better to communicate it to others!"

Let us fix our attention for a few short moments

upon this salutary thought, to bring humility to those of us who are near the end of time, and for the edification of those to whom time is yet given—for how long, they know not.

What, then, is Holy Scripture? Man will never be able to explain how it has been formed; particularly how the Spirit of God combined with the spirit of man, to make of it, at once, a divine work, lofty as the heavens, at the same time that it is entirely human and very near to us all. This is no less difficult to explain than the union of the divine and human nature in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The comparison is not mine, but is found in Holy Writ, which calls itself the written Word, and calls Jesus Christ the Living Word.

However it may have been formed, Holy Scripture is the language of heaven spoken upon earth; the maxims of the kingdom of heaven imparted to man in human language, as if the invisible kingdom had descended into our midst, and lay open before our eyes. There is no other book, even among the very best, which communicates to us the mysteries of God's kingdom. All others are full of human error. Scripture alone is exempt. It is the book of God, filled full with His truth. We hear God speaking in it, by His Holy Spirit. We see in it God, and man, the present

and the future, time and eternity, described just as they are. When we thus realize what Holy Scripture is, it will not be difficult to acknowledge our duty to avail ourselves of it. We ought to interrogate Scripture, as we would ask questions of an angel sent expressly from heaven by God to instruct us; or, far better still, as we should question our Lord Jesus Christ, if we had Him with us this moment; if we could speak to Him and hear Him. In point of fact, we *do* speak to Him, and we *do* hear Him, when we read the Holy Scriptures. As they reveal Him to us, so also they reveal all things by His Holy Spirit and in His name. Ah! how can we treat this Holy Book with sufficient attention and respect? The Bible is not, in itself, of course, the the truth which saves us, but it is the way to it. It is not our salvation, but it is the book which reveals our salvation to us; without which we should never have known it, and by which, in the proportion that we are better acquainted with it, we shall also grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls. No Christian will contest the truth of these principles, and yet, how very rare are those who profoundly study the Scriptures! Most read them superficially and confine themselves to the study of a few great general truths, instead of penetrating always deeper and deeper, and, as far as possible, grasping all

that is to be found; as it is written: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever."

Whence, then, this singular inconsistency in us? The reason is, because of the difficulties which the Bible presents to us; and it must be confessed that, at the outset, we do find much that is difficult and obscure; and so, as it requires time and labor to remove these difficulties, and the mind of man being naturally idle and slothful, little by little we lose courage, and though we continue to read over and over again, still we confine ourselves to the same uniform amount of labor and study, hardly ever penetrate below the surface, never learn any thing new, and going always over the same thing, we feel at times a certain degree of fatigue, as if the Word of God were not interesting, as if it were not capable of instructing us for ever and ever, as if it were not inexhaustible as God Himself!

Let us never allow ourselves to believe that the difficulties are invincible. No, my friends; but we must take pains; and here, as well as in prayer, and in every other duty of the Christian life, God desires that man be a worker with Him. Knowledge of the Bible and taste for the Bible are the fruit and the recompense of humble, sincere, and persevering labor.

Ah! may each one of you return to His Bible with new ardor! Study book after book, not merely with a view of acquiring general sentiments of piety, but to gain a profound and growing knowledge of the kingdom of heaven. Study one book until you have understood it as well as possible for you to do, then pass on to a second, a third, and so on; and you will find, after a second or third reading, many difficulties will vanish, which at first seemed insurmountable; and if even some still remain, you will none the less reap the fruit of the labor you have performed before the eyes of God. Do not except from this careful study, even the most difficult books, the prophets, the lesser prophets, which many Christians leave aside as unintelligible. If you will only give yourselves the trouble to study them, you will find much that is most interesting. There are besides, through the goodness of God, excellent books, good commentaries upon certain parts of Scripture, which may serve as a key to other parts; and with the help of such good books, we can penetrate deeper and deeper into the knowledge of the word of God. And then, we must apply ourselves chiefly to those parts of the Book which address themselves more particularly to Christians, but, I repeat, without neglecting any part. The fruit and the recompense of those who will be thus faithful and

persevering, will be to understand the Word of God, to love it, to enter more profoundly into its hidden meanings, and to find the time always too short to become well acquainted with it. I knew a man who spent seven hours every day in the study of the Bible, and who found ever-increasing charm in his work.

If any one of us, making use of all the resources which God has placed within his reach, in faith, and trusting in God to lead him, would carry out the thoughts which I have now only been able to indicate, he will find in the Word of God treasures which he had never before suspected. It will become a stay and support to him as firm as it was to Jesus tempted in the desert; it will be to him what it was to the saints of the New Testament, and what the portions existing before them were to the Old Testament saints also; what it was to David; what it was to Daniel; what it was to St. Paul and to all the saints of God.

May God give us all the grace to do this! May He, to whom it is no more difficult to bless in a short space of time, than after much time; with great power, than with little power; may He grant that the words I have said to you may so sink into your hearts, that they may effect a change in your reading and study of the Bible, for which you will bless God to all eternity! Amen!

XVI.

THE REGRETS OF A DYING MAN.

III.—ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

(January 27, 1856.)

My strength is exhausted, dear friends, and I have asked myself whether it would not be better to omit my address this time. I will endeavor, however, to say what I had intended to say, but must limit myself to merely indicating my thoughts.

One of the things that trouble the Christian who believes himself near his end, or rather would trouble him if he were not at the foot of the cross, is the manner in which he has employed his time. This, then, is one of the warnings which he ought to address to his living brethren. It is written, "Redeem the opportunity." This is more exact than the received version, "Redeem the time." The meaning is, embrace with eagerness the opportunity which God gives us, because

the days are evil, and an opportunity once neglected may never occur again. The idea of the proper employment of time is in itself so grand that it affrights our souls, and we might express the thought something more modestly by saying: "Seize with avidity all opportunities which God sends us in the order in which He presents them." How much time, how many opportunities are lost by idleness, incredulity, by negligence, egotism, following our own will, by indecision, attachment to sin, and by a thousand other causes! It is not necessary to dwell upon this, for there is no Christian whose heart does not condemn him and whose conscience is not troubled in this regard. Ah! how precious and how ample is the time that God gives us! He, the just One, measures our time by our work, and our work by our time, and never gives us a good work to do for which time is wanting, nor a single moment of our existence in which we have not something good to do. How, then, can we succeed in thus filling up our whole time, and in doing at least a part of the immense amount of good which a single man could accomplish, if he would put in practise the precept, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," and if he were constantly occupied in the service of the Lord? I desire to offer you two or three suggestions, and leave to your

own consciences the task of developing them more thoroughly:

1. First, we must be quite persuaded of the truth that we do not belong to ourselves, and that our time is no more our own than any thing else we may possess. Our time is God's, and we must therefore always look to Him for what we are to do to fill up the time that He gives us, and to respond to the opportunities which He presents to us. I assure you that sickness gives us very precious lessons on this subject. It teaches us, I mean, that we do not belong to ourselves, but to God. Our own heart is naturally prone to constitute itself the centre and the object of our life, and this is the very root of sin. But when we are ill, when we suffer, how can we find consolation, if we seek the aim of our life in ourselves? Our life's aim has then completely failed, and sickness teaches us to seek it elsewhere. It teaches us that we do not live to be happy on earth, but to glorify God; and this we can do as well, and often better, in sickness than in health. Let us learn, then, from sickness, and from all the sufferings of life, as well as from the whole Word of God, that our whole time belongs to God, and that our duty is to employ it wholly for His glory.

2. We must be ever eager to embrace the opportunities which God presents to us. They will not be

wanting, and we shall find a path of life before us, all interwoven with good works ready prepared for us; and all we have to do, is to walk in this path. The works will link themselves together, and each will so easily and naturally suggest others, that our life will become one good work, namely obedience, and consequently, as we heard just now, peace and joy, by the Holy Ghost. In order to this, we must keep our eyes constantly open and turned toward God, saying to Him, "Lord behold me, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and then when one thing is done, "Lord, what wilt Thou that I do next?" without any interval of time not entirely filled up with the obedience due to God. He will give us opportunities of doing, by degrees, an incalculable amount of good. One cannot estimate the amount of well-doing which may enter into and form the life of one single man who is thus disposed to act.

Look at the life of Jesus Christ as Man. In the things of this world, too, those who have accomplished the most, are the men who lived upon the principle of seizing opportunities as offered them. If you study carefully the lives of men whose works have been numerous and wide-spread—Calvin for example, or Luther, or Bossuet—you will observe that they did all that was presented to them, and as it was presented to them

on their path through life. You will note that opportunity summoned these men, gradually, to do all that they have done; as Bossuet was led to compose his best works by the educational requirements of his pupil the dauphin, and the best writings of Calvin and Luther were also the result of circumstances. On the other hand, ordinary men who accomplish but little are those who do not know how to grasp opportunities and profit by them. They might, perhaps, be able to accomplish quite as much as those who have done the most, but they have not the art of availing themselves of opportunities. The true art of embracing opportunities, is the Christian art of keeping our eyes turned always to the Lord, of accepting each duty as He presents it to us, and, when that is done, then passing on to another. It is wonderful how much a single human life can accomplish in this manner, by simply following the path which the Lord opens before the eyes of each one of us.

3. We must work with method, according to rule, and leave nothing to chance, in the employment of the time which God has given us. I said, a few days ago, that we must not make our plans for ourselves, but there is nothing contradictory in saying that we must act methodically, provided that we seek our method in the Lord. To do what God gives us to do, we must

employ system and regularity. Thus it is proper that we should have fixed hours for rising in the morning, fixed hours assigned to daily labor, and should be as exact as possible in the hours of our meals, and of all our various daily occupations. Our life then becomes simpler, pleasanter, and more easy to fill up with its duties. It is, as it were, a framework, all prepared and ready, upon which the Lord has only to act His will. The men who have done the most are those who have understood how to regulate their life strictly and tranquilly; especially if they have been able to add, to their systematic steadiness, animation of spirit and warmth of soul. These qualities do not usually accompany order and method, but, when the combination exists, it renders a man capable of an astonishing amount of work. It is said that the philosopher Kant took pleasure in appealing to his servant to testify that, for forty years, he had risen every day at four o'clock in the morning. Think for a moment of the amount of work a man can get through, who rises every morning at four o'clock! And see, besides, the power of method, independently of the hour of rising. From the mere fact that we have a fixed hour, how much more time do we have, to consecrate to the Lord, for this simple reason: if I rise every day at a fixed time, I have adopted this hour, with prayer, before

God, while bearing in mind, of course, the suggestions of Christian wisdom and prudence. If, on the other hand, I leave my hour of rising to chance, it is determined by the impulse of the moment, that is to say, by various circumstances which I ought to be able to control; it will depend upon laziness, upon my desire for "a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth;" a poverty not only of gold, but of spirit, of work, and of the service of God. Thus then, method, a life peacefully ordered as before the Lord, is a matter of the highest importance to teach us to do much for the service of God.

And, lastly, not to multiply our reflections, let us keep our bodies and our spirits in such condition that they offer no obstacle to the proper employment of our time, and of the gifts which we have received to be used according to the will of God. Sadness, inequality of spirits or temper, the bias of our own will, thoughts of self, desire of the glory of men—these are all so many obstacles which surround us and plague us without ceasing, and we must apply ourselves to control and defeat them.

Nor must we neglect the body. Bad health or a feeble frame often throws great obstacles in the way of the accomplishment of our work before God. We

must accept it, when God sends it, but it is our duty, before Him, to take all the exercise necessary for the body, and all requisite precautions to strengthen it, for the service and glory of God. This thought elevates and sanctifies all our actions. There are many who would have been able to accomplish a great deal more for the glory of God, had they not been carried away by an energy and activity, pious indeed, but unreflecting, which wore them out while still young. Those who die early have to examine themselves, whether they have not neglected certain simple precautions, easy in themselves, but difficult to persevere in, which would have enabled them to work longer in God's service.

But, above all, let us strengthen our spirits and souls, and avoid all that is calculated to impede any work that God desires to accomplish in us or by our means.

My dear friends, we none of us know how much time we have remaining, but we do know what we have had, and how much we have to reproach ourselves for the use we have made of it. Let us seize then, eagerly, upon all that is still left us, whether we be strong or feeble, ill or well, living or dying. We have a Saviour who spent every instant of His life on earth, in obedience to God. Let us walk in His foot-

steps, by the cross, to glory, and at the end we shall hear the sweet words: "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

XVII.

THE REGRETS OF A DYING MAN.

IV.—PRAYER.

(February 3, 1856.)

My dear friends in Christ, among the subjects upon which the dying Christian would dwell, as he approaches his end, there is doubtless nothing that he would more regret and more earnestly desire to reform, if life were spared him, than his manner of prayer.

What is prayer in reality, and what is it in the practice of most Christians? I say of believing, praying Christians. A few moments in the morning consecrated to retirement, and a few moments in the evening; more or less long, more or less short—sometimes very short; and, now and then, a lifting up the soul to God under extraordinary circumstances which bring the feeling of an especial need of approaching Him. To these meagre proportions are reduced the daily habits of

many Christians, or men calling themselves Christians. How few, therefore, of the fruits of prayer, so often promised in Scripture, are known to most of us! Where are the powerful fruits of sanctification, making the soul triumph over all temptation, like Jesus in the desert, which "make us more than conquerors through Him who loved us?" Where are all the fruits of consolation, spreading abroad in the heart a joy so sweet and profound, able to rise superior to all afflictions of earth, even all the bitternesses and anguish of heart, spirit, and flesh, enabling us to rejoice always with that perfect joy which the dying Jesus wished for His disciples, who were entering upon lives of suffering and trial unto death? Where are the fruits of deliverance, when the soul obtains from God all it asks for, whether it says, with Jesus, "I know that Thou hearest me always;" or, not able to rise so high, it may say, at least, with David, "Thou wilt hear, O Lord my God!"

Let us be sincere. We must admit that, between the Scripture promises made to prayer, and the fruits which we receive from prayer, there is so wide a distance that our faith is often troubled, and at moments even perhaps shaken, and we have asked ourselves, "Is this all?" No, it is not all that has been promised us, but then we have not done all that has been com-

manded us. Ah! my friends, prayer, as I have been sketching it from Nature, is a very different thing from prayer as presented to us by Scripture, the prayer to which all the promises are made!

Prayer, according to Scripture, what is it not? I said, a few days ago, that the Holy Scripture, the Word of God, is heaven in words; and, following out the same image, I might say that prayer, as understood by Scripture, is heaven in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Without the Word, prayer becomes naught, having nothing to feed upon; without prayer, the Word is powerless and does not penetrate into the heart. But when the truths of heaven, with which Holy Scripture is filled, are received and assimilated into the very substance of our souls by prayer, and penetrate even to the depths and vitals of our inner man, then we know and feel that prayer brings heaven within us, and all its blessings, the Holy Spirit and all His grace, God and all His promises.

Prayer is the key which God has placed in our hands to put us into communication with the invisible world. Every thing is ours through prayer; and, without prayer, nothing. It is, I say, a key which God has placed in our hands; for there is another key which He has kept in His own. He deigns to use it sometimes, to open the invisible world for us, when we

have neglected to open for ourselves, to put ourselves into communication with Him, and act in unison with His divine action, as it is written, "We are fellow-workers with God." God struck down Saul on the road to Damascus, and raised him up another man. He opened heaven to him at a time when, far from seeking it, he was searching for the disciples of Christ to torture and kill them. But we are not to count upon such instances of grace as this, and they would be all the less granted to us, if we did count upon them. Doubtless, if we think well on the subject, we may find at bottom, in cases of such manifestation of Divine grace, a sincere desire in the soul to search after God. This very Saul of Tarsus, who went about persecuting the name of Jesus in His people, had nevertheless a heart sincerely seeking for God, and praying Him to be led into the truth. Perhaps the spark of a new life began to penetrate his soul from the moment that holy Stephen prayed for those who were murdering him. Who can tell?

However this may be, the ordinary way of God is to grant His grace to prayer, and to wait for prayer before He does grant it. Isaiah says, "Therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you." What will He wait for? He waits until you have cried unto Him. And in Jeremiah, "Ye shall go and

pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." It is the same thing with us now. By prayer we can obtain all things, and to real, true prayer, as described in Scripture, all the promises are made.

Prayer, my friends, is the distinctive mark of the mighty servants of the Lord. With considerable differences, they all present this common feature. They all pray much, and pray ardently. Remember the prayers of Jacob; he strives and wrestles with the Lord for a whole night, until he triumphs over the Lord Himself who lends Himself to this triumph, as an exercise of His servant's faith. Look at the prayers of Moses and of Samuel—of Moses the founder, and of Samuel the reformer of Israel. Jeremiah says, at the beginning of his fifteenth chapter, to show that God was determined not to grant a certain favor: "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people." Let us try to substitute our own name for that of Moses or Samuel: if such and such a one of us had prayed, this thing would not be granted! . . What a fall! what humiliation! what absurdity! Take the prayers of David, the Psalms; prayers competent not only to support him in his troubles, but are as if one hundred and fifty pillars

which from generation to generation have supported, and will support unto the end of the world, all the generations of the people of God! Look at the prayers of King Jehoshaphat, who destroyed by prayer alone the combined armies of the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir; and of King Hezekiah, his great-grandson and imitator, who by prayer alone calls down from an avenging God utter extermination upon an army of a hundred and eighty-five thousand men, who were only waiting to raze Jerusalem to its foundations! Look at the prayers of Nehemiah and Esdras, for the elevation and reformation of their people, after the example of Moses and Samuel; the one by improving their spiritual condition and their observance of the law, the other by rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and reëstablishing its civil government. Look at the prayers of Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith," who though He was Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God, prays without ceasing, passes whole nights in prayer, and does nothing without prayer. He appoints His twelve apostles after prayer, and supports and encourages them by prayer. He triumphs by prayer over the demon in the desert, in Gethsemane, and at Golgotha. He accomplishes the entire work of our redemption by prayer, having been made thereby capable of enduring

the most unheard-of anguish, of which our intensest sufferings are hardly sufficient to give us the faintest idea. Following in the steps of Jesus, the ranks of praying men recommence. St. Paul, what a giant in prayer! Prayer is the very soul and main-spring of all his work. Prayer makes him more especially what he is. See the prayers of St. Augustine, of Calvin, and Luther. When Luther appeared before the Diet of Worms, he passed three hours of the best part of the day in crying to God with a loud voice; little thinking that his faithful friend Dietrich was indiscreetly listening to him and preserving his glowing prayers for the good of the Church.[1]

[1] Dietrich wrote to Melancthon (Schreiben an Ph. Melancthon, Walch, Theil xvi., p. 2139), speaking of Luther at Coburg, during the Augsburg Diet: "I cannot sufficiently admire his firmness, his joy, his faith, and his hope, in this time of desolation. He strengthens himself every day in these feelings by constant recourse to the Word of God. Not a day passes without his reserving, for prayer, *at least three hours*, from the part of the day most favorable for work. One day, I had the privilege of hearing him pray. Great God! what spirit, what faith in his words! He prays with all the devoutness of a man feeling himself in God's presence, but with all the confidence of a child speaking to his father. '*I know*,' he said, '*that Thou art our good God and our Father; and that is why I am persuaded that Thou wilt destroy those who persecute Thy children. If Thou doest it not, the danger is as much for Thee as for us. This cause is Thine own. What we have done, we could not have done otherwise. It remains for Thee, merciful Father, to protect us.*' While, from a distance, I was listening to him as he prayed in these words, with clear voice, my heart within me glowed with joy, as I heard him speaking thus to God, with so much fervor and at the same time so much free-

Look at the prayers of Pascal, visited, so young, with sufferings so constant and cruel, but enabled to rise superior to them with a firmness and a piety which we find deeply impressed on his beautiful and powerful prayers, which have been preserved for us. Look at the prayers of all saints in all times. Prayer is their faith, their life, their spring of action, their whole work.

O my friends, I do not know if you feel as profoundly humbled as I do, by remembering all this. For my part, I cannot express the depth of my humiliation in recalling what my prayers have been, in comparison with what they ought to have been and might have been. Certainly, in our humble sphere of action, we should have been what all these men were in the history of Scripture and of the Church, if we had known how to pray as they prayed; if, instead of saying that it was a special privilege granted by God to them, we could say, "Lord, teach me to pray!"

Ah! if I were to return to life, with the help of God, and in distrust of myself, I would devote much more time to prayer than to work; though we must not neglect work either, but it only gains power when

dom. He built his hopes in particular so firmly upon the promises of the Psalms, that he seemed quite assured that nothing he asked for could fail of accomplishment."

sustained and animated by prayer. Above all, I would desire to feel in my prayers the unction and fervor of the Holy Spirit. This is not to be learned in a day, but is the fruit of a long and sometimes painful experience.

O my friends, you who are full of life; whose career seems far from its close—though what can we know? I may live longer than you—embrace the opportunity and redeem it. Form new habits of prayer. With the spirit of fervor, infuse into your prayers a spirit of order and method, which will increase their power, as it increases the power of all human things, and coöperates with the Divine power itself. Imitate the order and method of which Jesus Christ has given us an example in the model prayer, the Lord's prayer.

Finally, entreat God to lead you, and go from hence filled with the supplication, "Lord, teach us to pray!" I will do the same thing, however short my time may be. God does not look at the shortness or length of our time, but at the desire of our hearts. Let us strive, all together, animated by the same spirit, and with hearts humbled by the weakness and languor of our prayers, let us form the holy resolution to know at last for ourselves, by our own personal experience, what the real and true promises are, that we may receive the blessed heritage in that invisible world,

with which prayer alone, by the Word of God, can put us into communication. The invisible world, nearer to some and farther from others than they think or wish, will open to us all, old and young, in ten, twenty, fifty, or a hundred years (that would be enormously long); that is to say, "in the twinkling of an eye." It will open to all those of us who have placed their entire hope in Christ crucified and raised from the dead. This is my prayer for you all, and, when the Lord calls me to Himself, it is the heritage I desire to leave to my dear family, and to each one of you! Amen.

XVIII.

THE REGRETS OF A DYING MAN.

V.—OVER-INTEREST IN THE LESSER CONCERNS OF LIFE.

(February 10, 1856.)

You give me a new proof of brotherly affection, my dear friends, in again partaking, with me, of our Lord's feast of love.

One of the things which would afflict the soul of a man who is looking at death from a very near point of view (if, indeed, in this, as in every other regret, he were not comforted by the free grace of God in Jesus Christ), is the memory of the part of his life lost, if not worse than lost, in the comparatively trifling concerns of life, instead of being occupied with the great and important interests which ought to be always before a Christian's eyes. I desire, therefore, to call your attention for a moment to the great evil there is in the Christian's allowing himself to be preoccupied

with interests of minor importance. First, I must explain that preoccupation with smaller interests must not be confounded with attention bestowed on small things. We are called upon by God to busy ourselves with a multitude of little things; life, indeed, is made up of them. The manner in which we perform our small duties is as faithful, and often a more faithful, test of our piety, than our manner of fulfilling our greater duties; because, in the case of the former, we have no other witnesses than God, ourselves, and our families; whereas, in the latter case, we are often placed in a sort of theatre, where our pride finds only too often satisfaction in the position. Besides, nothing we do is small or great in itself, but only becomes so by the spirit which governs our action. In the eyes of God, what we call small is as great as what we call greatest, and what we call great, as small as what we call smallest; for God is infinite and eternal. A faithful servant, for example, who, for the love of God's sake, takes affectionate care of a child intrusted to her by her master, performs a very great deed in the sight of God, and it will have its reward. On the other hand, the statesman who, impelled by love of self, aspires to the highest honors of wisdom or eloquence, performs a very mean act in the sight of God, which may draw down upon him more shame in heaven than

glory upon earth. The important point is, to infuse into all our actions a large, elevated spirit, looking always to God, and doing all things as in sight of Him, and in view of eternity; keeping God always in our hearts, that He may be present also in our words and our works, that there may be nothing small or mean, earthly or fleeting, in our entire life.

The example of God Himself will explain clearly what I have said. God makes no difference between small things and great in the ordering of His providence. He bestows as much care upon the creation of the minutest plant, and the smallest snow-flake, as He does upon the proportions, relations, and movements of the heavenly bodies; and whether He creates a grain of sand, or rears a Mont Blanc, He does it, as only He can do it, namely, in perfection, with thorough care. Moreover, He who finds nothing too insignificant to command His attention, has eternity, His kingdom and His glory before His eyes, as well in His lesser as in His greater works; as He Himself said, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself." In all the works of God, moral or physical, there is absolutely nothing in which He has not borne the immense burden of infinite care and eternal interest. The same with Jesus, God made visible. Not only does He not neglect the poor little children brought

unto Him, though His apostles thought it beneath Him to bless them, but He did not even lose sight of the fragments of the loaves and fishes, and desired that nothing should be lost; this, too, when He had just shown that at a word, and even without a word, He could multiply loaves and fishes at His will. This is the same Jesus who accomplished the mighty works of His incarnation, His Redemption, His Passion, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension. He does all things in the same spirit; whether He clothes Himself in our flesh, or redeems us, or suffers for us; whether He rises from the tomb or mounts to the skies; whether He stops on His way, to bless little children, or to command that fragments of bread and fish be gathered up, to speak a brief word of consolation to a sufferer, or to give a cup of cold water to the thirsty; in each and all of His acts, He ever keeps in view God, eternity, and His Father's glory. Hence it is that Jesus Christ appears to us, in all His works, as though His head were in heaven while His feet still remain on earth; speaking of Himself, He says, "He who is in heaven." As His soul is all great, so also are all His works and all His thoughts.

Here, then, dear friends, is the example set before us; and in like manner ought we also to walk; not troubled by the small interests of earth, still less by its

desires and its sins, but always engrossed by God, by His glory, His love, and by the work of Christ, for His honor, for our welfare and for that of all mankind.

Made in the image and likeness of God, we ought to be His imitators, and in our lesser as well as our greater efforts, should always keep predominant the thought of God and of eternity. The Christian, whatever he says or does, ought to be always great in the eyes of God, who knows how to estimate real greatness. The old painters represented the saints with a *nimbus* of light around their heads; Scripture does nothing of the kind, excepting in the case of one saint of the Old Testament, and this in an entirely exceptional manner. Saints wear their crown of light in themselves, and let it beam from within, wherever they go. In like manner, the Christian must make such an impression upon others, that, wherever he is seen, in the street or the drawing-room, at table, in prison, or at the very summit of human greatness, he may always impress others with the feeling that he is a man seeking after God, striving for the advancement of the great interests of humanity; who finds it not worth while to live for any thing else than to glorify God, and makes all his successes and reverses conduce to this end; who is ready to part with his life as soon as his work in this direction is accomplished, and, like his Master, goes

about from place to place, doing good. Oh, how holy would such a Christian be! how happy! how free from desires, from envy, anxiety, and all that troubles the soul! Walking ever with God, what honor would he not do to the Gospel! How victoriously would he close the mouths of his opponents, and how many souls he would lead to his Saviour, by the humble brilliancy of his thoroughly holy life, more effective than his most powerful words!

But where are such Christians? O my God, where are they!

How much easier to find Christians—true, sincere Christians, I mean—who, if about to die, would commend their souls into the hands of their Saviour, and who in the main depend upon Him, but allow themselves to be turned out of their way and engrossed with the lesser interests of life; by love of money, by thirst for the glory of men, by jealousy of a rival's success, by ardent desire for personal success, by ambitions outside the paths chosen for them by God, by impatience of ills, repugnance to humiliations and crosses; who allow themselves to be disturbed and irritated in temper by a single word, perhaps misunderstood, or by an insignificant act which, when death comes, and perhaps even in an hour's time, will be entirely forgotten!

O my God, how very few are the really consistent Christians! My friends, in this way the Gospel is compromised by those who profess to be its followers; of whom it is so often said, that they pursue, after all, only what is pursued by others, and that what troubles and annoys others, equally troubles and annoys them. The Gospel is thus injured by those very persons who seek in it all their peace and safety, and who ought to employ all their strength and all their life for its glory, walking with head erect—even like Jesus, with their head in heaven though their feet are still upon earth; still breathing in heaven, and finding there the source and principle of all their actions, and the whole power of their life.

If you knew, my friends, how all illusions are dissipated when we find ourselves near unto death; how all that is small then appears small, and all that then seems great is what really is great in the eyes of God; if you knew how you will regret not having lived more for God, as Jesus lived for Him, and if you had to begin life again, how earnestly you would desire to live in a far more serious manner, more filled with Jesus Christ, with His word and with His example—ah! if you knew!—you would this moment put your hand to the work; you would supplicate God to conform your conduct to your feelings and to your faith.

And you would succeed, too—as, after all, so many have succeeded before you, because they have cried unto God, and have sincerely desired and *willed* to do so, before Him. And the little company of God's children gathered together in this chamber, around my bed of sickness, and probably of death—this little band of Christians, with all their infirmities and languor—would do more for the advancement of the kingdom of God and for the good of humanity, than a compact crowd invested with all possible gifts. They would be capable of action, great according to the degree that they henceforth entirely banish every thought of vain personal greatness from their hearts.

This is my wish for you, and my ardent prayer for you. It is also the prayer that I earnestly beg you to offer up to God for me; to the end that, during whatever time may still remain for me, I may have no other thought than to live for the glory of God and the good of my fellow-men. This will be, at the same time, to live for my own eternal joy. Amen.

XIX.

JESUS CHRIST.

(February 17, 1856.)

When we reflect upon what we have just been doing, recalling to our minds all that God has given us in His well-beloved Son, we should feel disposed either to keep silence, or to add to the solemn service words only of adoration and thanksgiving. Since, however, the Lord calls upon us to glorify His Word and to bear testimony to its truth, and since in some situations our opportunities to do so are very rare, I will continue, relying upon the help of God, to lay before you the truth as I feel it in my heart, until the day come when the Lord shall say to me, as He closes my lips: "Enough! thou hast said enough! Go, now, and rest from thy labors in the bosom of thy Lord."

You know I like to speak to you here, under the title "The Regrets of a Dying Man," of a Christian's

views when he believes himself near his end; of the employment he has made of his life, or that he would wish to make were life continued to him, and that he would desire to see made by his brethren still in life.

But I feel myself especially called upon, in my peculiar situation, and particularly in view of the dark and agitated times in which we live, to bear testimony to the conclusions to which the Christian life and my pastoral ministry in infirmity have led me. I desire that it be well known and understood in what state of feeling I shall lie down and sleep, when God calls me, and that there may be no sort of doubt in the minds of my friends and brethren, and of the whole Church, upon the subject which forms, now in this moment, and, I trust in the goodness of God, will ever more and more form, the assurance of my soul.

There is, first, an important matter upon which I do not linger now, as we have lately dwelt upon it at sufficient length. I know that my little audience changes from week to week, but I cannot do otherwise than follow a certain order in the thoughts which I express to you. Our first subject was Sin. The first point we have to gain is a clear and profound sense of our sinful condition before God. Not only must we be convinced that we have sinned against His holy laws, but that we have also begun to realize the enormity of

sin, the terror of the judgments of God, and the depth of the abyss from which we are to be saved. Once persuaded of the whole bitterness of sin, without extenuation, without explanation or excuse of any sort, only saying, "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned," the entire Gospel is summed up for us, my dear friends, and particularly for me at this moment, in a single word, or rather in a single name, Jesus Christ—as St. Paul says to us: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Who is Jesus Christ? What is He? What idea have you formed of Him? How would you reply to His question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Here is the foundation and beginning of our faith. (O my God! strengthen my heart and my lips, that, in my affliction, I may glorify Thee!)

In contemplating Jesus, we see Him first as man, but very soon perceive that He is no ordinary man. We find in Him an infinite charity, a loving-kindness ever ready to come to our aid, and a power ever capable of relieving us; a master and a deliverer, healing the ills of the body, to show that He can heal those of the soul, even our most secret and deepest afflictions; a holiness without spot, the holiness of God Himself brought down to earth; we find, in a word, in the

body and spirit of a man, a divine perfection of truth, of power, of kindness, and of deliverance, which no man has ever possessed or can conceive of; and this draws us to Him with instinctive conviction that He, and He alone, can give us the relief of which we stand in need. But as we listen to Scripture, and to Himself, the mystery begins to explain itself; only, however, by another mystery still more profound. We learn that our Lord Jesus Christ—for such is the man we have been contemplating—born of supernatural birth, is not only the Son of man, but also, at the same time, Son of God: as Son of man, He is man: as Son of God, He is God. If His virtues, His power, holiness, and loving-kindness are divine, it is that He is God. He is the reflection of the person of God, and of the splendor of His majesty, "for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This is the mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh, God able to say to His disciples, as we heard just now, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

This, my dear friends, I am more and more deeply convinced, is properly the key of the entire evangelical edifice, and the foundation of the whole Gospel; and this is the conviction of all the faithful, from the beginning to the end—prophets, as far as it was given them to see into the future, patriarchs, apostles, wit-

nesses, martyrs, the faithful fathers of the Church, reformers, servants of the Lord in all ages. From this point of departure diverge all the infinitely numerous paths toward all acts of faith and obedience to which we may be called; so that Christian life rests so entirely upon this foundation, Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, that, outside and beyond this, not only is Jesus Christ dethroned, but God also Himself. The living God lives no more: we hear of a god of the deists, a god of the pantheists, a god of the rationalists; but this is not a living, it is only a dead God, who has never saved any one, nor sanctified, nor consoled any one, because the true God is He who reveals Himself to us, and that not only, but who gives Himself to us in Jesus Christ; as some one has well said, in the creation God shows us His hand, but in the redemption He gives us His heart.

Jesus Christ God, and at the same time man, truly and really man, and truly and fully God, seems to many a doctrine of speculation rather than of practice (my God, strengthen my feeble voice and my sinking soul!); but it is not so. Very far from being a doctrine of speculation, it is the very foundation of Christian practice and Christian life. St. Paul, while he calls it a mystery, calls it "the mystery of Godliness;" "great is the mystery of Godliness." Apart

from or outside of it, there is no Christian life, no Christian holiness, Christian consolation, or Christian strength, and can be no Christian death. It is the foundation of all the rest; and the grace of the Lord Jesus shed abroad in our hearts, is our only strength as well as our only hope.

This is why I desire it to be known, and declare, that in Jesus Christ I behold my God, before whom, with St. Thomas, I prostrate myself, and say, "My Lord and my God!" I testify of Him with St. John, "This is the true God and eternal life;" and with St. Paul, that He "is over all, God blessed forever." I honor Him as I honor the Father; knowing that the Father, so jealous of His glory, far from being jealous of the glory which I render to Jesus, approves of it, as if it were rendered to Himself; for He desires "that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." I strive to live in communion with Jesus Christ, and in the peace of Jesus Christ, praying to Him, trusting Him, speaking to Him, listening to Him, and offering Him, in short, a constant series of testimonies, by day and by night, which would be idolatry if He were not God, and if He were not God in the highest and most unique sense that the human spirit is capable of giving to this sublime name. Jesus Christ is *He who is:* "I am"—"I am the way, the truth, and

the life"—"I am that I am"—"Jehovah"—"the Lord God Almighty." Jesus Christ is all this; and He is all this to me. If, in the last moments of my life, I may be prevented by sickness from rendering Him this my testimony, I wish it understood that I render it to Him now and here; and, in rendering it, I have no thought of withdrawing it forever; for I never experienced the little faith and consolation, nor the little holiness and charity which I may possess (all of which I pray God to increase), until, changing my earlier sentiments, I learned to adore Jesus Christ as my Saviour and my God.

Assured of this, I find Jesus Christ at the same time my brother, like unto myself—my friend, him who is with me, near me, and, as beautifully expressed in the eighty-fourth Psalm, "my sun and my shield." My sun is my protection from afar; my shield is my protection at my side. Between this divine Sun and myself there is so much, a distance so immense (in a material point of view I leave to others to calculate it, though none can measure the spiritual distance), that I have need of the Lord close to me, like a shield protecting me all around; whose heart may press my heart; whose arms are constantly about me, so that I may say to Him, and if I wish, in His ear, so that none other may hear me: "I am Thine and Thou art

mine. I know Thee who Thou art, my God and my brother; and Thou knowest who I am, Thy child and Thy servant, who, in spite of all his infirmities, believes in Thee, and only mourns that he believes so feebly, but who aspires to a degree of faith which will enable him to glorify Thee in his bitterest trials."—Jesus Christ, then, is my brother. Ah, what a privilege to have God for a brother, and to have a brother in God! I shall never be able even to attempt to say all I feel of the deep, tender mystery of this union of God with man.—This is what Jesus Christ is to me.

I am not able to say more now, but you see what my thoughts are upon the subject of our Lord; and I shall be ready to confess them before His tribunal, whenever He may call me there, knowing that He will not deny me, although these feelings are as defective and imperfect as my adoration and my gratitude, which are infinitely below the measure which I owe Him.

This, my friends, is what Jesus Christ has become to me. This is what God in His grace has made Him to me, using turn by turn various methods of education, various examples, acts, books, and preaching. He has used these different instruments in differing manners and with varying degrees of light, and established me thus in His grace for all eternity. I have known

that He has been preparing me, and that He wished to give me the power of bearing what He is sending me to-day. And what He is sending me to-day will be the end and crowning (if indeed it should so prove, for we cannot yet affirm it) of all His dispensations to me.

I pray you to examine yourselves well, and see if Jesus Christ is for you what He is for the universal Church of the faithful; what He is, I repeat, for the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs, for the fathers and reformers of the Church, and for all saints of all times. If He be for you what He is according to His own Word, what He has declared Himself to be, what he is according to the testimony of the Father, then you may rest, but until then, never; for none should rest before he has learned to do so at the foot of the cross of His Saviour God, though he be driven thither by storms and by winds, and though he sink weary and fainting at the spot, which henceforth he will never more desire to leave!

XX.

THE SCRIPTURES.

(February 24, 1856.)

My dear friends in Christ, who show me so marked a proof of your affection, those of you who have been present at some of our meetings know that it is my especial pleasure, in the few words which I address to you, to review and reflect upon the recollections of a Christian who thinks himself about to appear before God, and then, in His presence, to sum up and impart to you the main results of his study of God's Word, and his conviction of the manner in which he would desire to pass his remaining life and meet his end. Having, from this point of view, given you the conclusions which I have reached concerning sin, and the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, I propose to occupy you a few moments to-day upon the subject of His Word.

I declare to you, as if before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, at which I am looking forward soon to appear, that all my researches and study, whether of Scripture, of Church history, or of my own heart—that all the discussions which in latter years have been raised upon the inspiration and divine authority of the Word of God, during the whole duration of my ministry (three periods of about ten years each, at Lyons, Montauban, and Paris), have only confirmed me, though by ways and means which the wisdom of God has made rather various, in my unalterable conviction that, when Scripture speaks, God speaks; when it proclaims His will, the way of salvation, the grand doctrines of sin and pardon, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, what it tells us is not less assuredly and absolutely true, than if at this moment the heavens were to open over our heads, and the voice of God should thunder as of old on Sinai, telling us the same things. There are no bounds to the confidence and submission that we owe to Scripture, any more than there are limits to the truth and faithfulness of God. I am so sure of this, that when the day, known only to God, shall come, the day to which I look forward as to a release (without, however, daring to wish to hasten it) —when that day comes, and I enter into the invisible world, I do not expect to find things there different

from what the Word of God has represented them to me here—excepting, of course, the immense difference between the state of the soul before and after death, in time or in eternity; but, in the main, the voice which I shall then hear, clothed with full powers of judgment, which will rule supreme over all creatures, will be the same voice which I hear to-day upon earth, and I shall say: "This is indeed what God has already told me, and how thankful I am to Him to-day that I have not waited to see before I believed!" The fact is, that Scripture is the divine expression of the truths and maxims which form the very foundation of things invisible and eternal; it is as if God had written a letter from the invisible world to His children confined here in the visible world, in order that, upon the testimony of God Himself, they may learn, in this life, how things are beyond, and act accordingly, for the salvation of their souls. Those will save their souls who believe God; but how can those save their souls who do not believe Him?

Scripture, then, is the Word of God, in the highest and at the same time the simplest and most popular sense of the word. It is the one only certain rule of faith and of life; a rule to which all others must yield. Meetings, conferences, prayers, ordinary study and research, nothing of the sort has any kind of value, except-

ing in so far as it is in accordance with and subordinated to the sovereign, infallible, immutable authority of the Word of God. The testimony which I here render to it is that of Moses, David, St. Paul, St. John, Augustine, Chrysostom, and of all saints of all time; nor only so, but it is the testimony of God Himself and of Jesus Christ, who ascribes the same glory to the Word of God as He receives from it.

Experience and observation, too, which we are permitted to summon to our aid, provided we do so in humble distrust of ourselves, mercifully confirm all these testimonies; for to no man has it been given, nor to any assemblage of men, to produce a book, however short, in any way equal to Holy Writ, or capable of consolation, sanctification, or conversion, in a similar degree; and it never will be given to any man, or assemblage of men, unless under the leading of the Holy Spirit, in the same especial manner that the apostles and prophets were led. It is not a question of personal holiness, for we recognize no less Scripture holiness in the words of St. Paul than in those of Jesus Christ Himself: it is a question of divine direction. This becomes more clearly apparent when we reflect that the Book was written in strict historic order, and that nevertheless, although covering a period of nearly two thousand years, its doctrine, on all points, is consistent

and uniform. The Bible is an exceptional book, which no writer has ever equalled, nor ever will equal. It reigns alone supreme over all systems, all doubts, and all questions, which occupy or agitate the human mind.

To enter now upon a new train of thought: for my own part, without the closest examination of the Bible, I have been scarcely able to sanction its title, the Word of God; the name given to it by God Himself and by Jesus Christ; for I find it full of man, comprising so many marks of humanity; and, at first, I might have felt a sort of fear, as if I had committed myself too far in the testimonies which I rendered to it. In fact, I observe an individuality of style and character, so marked in the different writers of the book, that if, by any impossible chance, a new discovery were made of a lost book, which had hitherto not formed a part of the canonical collection, there would be no man at all versed in Holy Scripture, who could not say instantly whether it were the work of Jeremiah or Isaiah, of St. Peter, St. John, or St. Paul, so great are the differences between all these authors, and so exactly has each invested all that he has written with his own particular and individual character. I find also much that the various writers would have been able to say without any especial aid of the Spirit of God (2 Tim. iv. 13, etc.); and, as God never performs

useless miracles, we see here the spirit of man taking part in the compilation of the Word of God. Still further: I find traces of human infirmity, as, for instance, where St. Paul tries to recollect, and does not dare to trust his own memory as to the number of persons he baptized at Corinth; it does not, however, give him any concern, "for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel" (1 Cor. i. 14–17, etc.). It seems to have been clearly God's intention that, on every page of the book which we call His Word, we should at the same time recognize the word of man.

Now, if one who has not reflected on the subject might experience a sort of fear at this, he will soon be reassured, and see, on the contrary, a pledge of blessing and light and spirituality in the human element which enters into the composition of Scripture. For how, in fact, could it be avoided? Only, of course, if it had been dictated word for word, without any influence of personal character or historic events. Let us take an extreme example and cite it with profound respect. When God puts into the mouth of a stupid animal words of rebuke against an unfaithful prophet, it is very evident that His Word acts without the agency of any medium gifted with will, and the *inspiration* (for inspiration it certainly is) is all the more noticeable in this instance, in that its instrument is entirely

passive. How can such an inspiration as this, the inspiration of a being without reason, be compared to the inspiration of an apostle, thoroughly imbued with his own experience and influenced by his personal feelings? Applying the same remark to all the several classes of media or instruments of inspiration, we learn that in proportion to the activity or passivity of its instrument, inspiration gains in interest as it becomes more personal, while at the same time it loses none of its authority.

How much more beautiful, then, is Holy Scripture, how much more touching, just as it has been given to us!—given us by God, in the order of history, through the medium of men whose spirits were led by the Spirit of God; men like ourselves, who could say, "I believed, therefore have I spoken;" men who could say, for example: "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."

The word of God, being given in history to men such as we are, and not brought down to us by superior, invisible beings, but by feeble creatures like ourselves, saved by the same means as we are, who were the first to believe, and could say, "I believe all that I ask you to believe"—has, for this reason, a life and fresh-

ness, and a power of touching our hearts far more deeply; it establishes between our hearts and itself a sort of familiarity, and, as it were, a secret friendship. On this account, the most solemn of all books is also the most tender and the most dear to us. Herein is a profound knowledge of the human heart, and one of the deepest and most subtle beauties of the Word of God.

Composed, then, by simple men, who, though its authors, were themselves not free from the necessity of battling with sin, nor of personal dependence upon the faith they were declaring, the Bible is not only none the less on this account the Word of God, but is all the more divine in proportion as it is more human; that is to say, we feel the power and presence of the Spirit of God, and His influence upon our souls, all the more from the fact that He has employed instruments to write it, to whom His Spirit alone could impart the supernatural power and light necessary to make them vessels destined to carry the truth to the ends of the earth. It is in this view that Holy Scripture penetrates into the deepest recesses of our hearts; and, while teaching us directly from God, it is instructing us at the same time by men, combining at once all conditions most capable of touching and enlightening us, of converting us to God, of withdrawing us from the

darkness of our age, and of accomplishing in us all good things. There is a contrast or rather a comparison, my dear friends—and this is my last thought on the subject—which, for the Christian, will serve fully to elucidate and confirm all I have said: namely, the aspect of Jesus Christ we spoke of last Sunday, which is given us everywhere in Scripture; His uniting in Himself the divine and human natures in a manner so marvellous that we cannot comprehend it, but which is nevertheless the foundation of our faith and its consolation. Last Sunday we began by considering Jesus Christ in His human perfection, after which we contemplated Him in His divinity. Suppose we had reversed this order, and had first spoken of the divine nature of our Lord, and of our obligation to adore Him as God, and that then, for the first time, we made the reflection that Jesus Christ is a man, capable of suffering and death—I know not what fear might have come over our souls, as if we had attributed to Him too much of the divine. But Scripture shows us everywhere, as we said last Sunday, that in Him perfect divinity is joined with perfect humanity, that each exalts the other, without in any way compromising its reality. It is revealed to us that He is all the more man in that He is the more God, and all the more God that He is the more man. For, at what moments of His life is Jesus most of all

man? Is it not in the temptation in the desert, in the anguish of Gethsemane, and the fearful agony of the cross? And are not these precisely the moments when He is most of all God, as victor over the tempter, surmounting the pain and triumphing over the cross, by the power of the Spirit of God, which dwells in Him, not as in us, in a measure, but without measure, as in the only Son of the Father?

The same can be said of the Word of God: it is the Word of God, His veritable, eternal Word, and at the same time it is the word of man, in which we feel the reflection of man's spirit, and hear the beating of man's heart. And we can further say that it is all the more divine when the most human, because precisely in the moments when in St. Paul or St. John, for example, we notice the combat of faith and the persevering struggle against sin, we feel all the more strongly how divine is the light shed forth in their souls, enabling them first to strive in their own behalf, and then, with divine courage, to spread abroad the light through the entire world.

How wonderful and admirable seems to me this point of resemblance between Jesus Christ and Holy Scripture! And you may well believe that I have not ventured to draw it from my own fancy, but it is furnished me by the Word of God itself. For him who

knows that Scripture never speaks in vain, it is enough to remember a very remarkable fact. The same name is applied to Jesus Christ and to Holy Scripture. They are both called the Word of God. The One, Jesus Christ, is the living Word of God, the personal manifestation of His invisible perfections to the human race; while the other, Holy Scripture, is the written Word of God, the verbal manifestation of the same invisible perfections, clothed in language. The two are inseparable for us: for Jesus Christ is not otherwise revealed to us than by Scripture, nor is Scripture given us except to reveal Jesus Christ. Scripture, then, is the written Word of God, as Jesus Christ is the living Word of God. Those who take their stand upon the human characteristics of Scripture to question its divinity, reason precisely as those do who appeal to the personal humanity of Jesus, to deny Him the title of God; not understanding that the human and the divine natures are united in the person of our Lord, in the same way as the divine is united with the human word in Holy Scripture. It is no more astonishing that Scripture, although the Word of God, should exhibit so many traces of humanity, than that Jesus Christ, although God, should be also man. As to the manner in which, in the one case, the two natures blend, and in the other, the two voices—the voice of

God, and the voice of man—that is the very foundation and object of our faith, a profound mystery, but as St. Paul tells us, "the mystery of godliness" which fills our souls with joy and hope.

Yes, Scripture is the one road by which we can attain to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, without danger of error, even as Jesus Christ is the one way, through which we can attain unto the Father. Yes, if you desire to save your souls, you must believe in the Word of God; must submit yourselves to the Word of God. Look for nothing within yourselves, by whatever fine name you may choose to call it, whether reason, intelligence, feeling, or conscience, to rise superior to, to judge, or to control the Word of God. It cannot be controlled, but must control. The greatest of all the servants of God are those who humbled themselves the most deeply before His Word, like David, St. Paul, Luther, or Calvin, who desired with jealousy to abase themselves before it to the very dust, and still lower, if they could.

May it, then, reign without rival, this Word of my Saviour God! I am so happy to render to it once again this my testimony, "before I go hence and am no more seen"—may it reign until the banner of eternal life, which here below we can only half unfurl, waves over us in the pure and serene light of heaven above!

XXI.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(March 2, 1856.)

WHAT a blessing and favor, dearly beloved, if we could only appreciate it, to receive this bread and wine which the Lord gives us; present Himself with us, though absent, and all the more present, being absent, than if He were actually here with us: "This is My body which is broken for you; this is My blood which is shed for you." We are called upon henceforth to do His work, by our intimate union with Him, by our possession of His body and blood. In His broken body and shed blood, we are called upon to endure all the sufferings and anguish of the flesh; renewed by the Holy Spirit in Him who calls us to His eternal communion, by means of the visible and present communion, we have for the work of Jesus, the strength of Jesus, the grace of Jesus, and the divine

nature of which we have been made partakers in Jesus by the promises of faith.

Alas! we are but of little faith. What a spectacle should we give to the world, if we were men of great faith, of a faith like that of the centurion, which excited the admiration and astonishment of the Lord Himself—a faith which, seizing hold upon Jesus Christ, would, in Him, seize upon eternal life, and all the treasures of grace which abound in this merciful Saviour!

We were occupied, a few days since, my dear friends, in considering the Christian's thoughts as he reaches his last moments; when, near the end of his earthly career, he says modestly and humbly to his Lord, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (if, indeed, he has been faithful in his humble sphere)—we were considering, I say, the power and the truth of that word by which our Lord is revealed to us, with which, day by day, He nourishes our souls, so that it is to us, as it were, a perpetual communion, by means of which we live in the life of Jesus Christ, and accomplish His work.

We must not forget, however, but learn well, whether from the declarations of the Word of God, or from the humiliating experiences of our own life, that this word, all-powerful and divine as it is (of which

Job said, "Oh, how forcible are right words!"), has no power excepting in so far as it is applied to our souls by that Spirit which has caused it to be written on the pages of the Book; which has worked upon the heart of such as Isaiah and Jeremiah, St. Paul and St. John, and, having chosen them for organs, has led them to impart eternal truth, without danger of error, to all generations of men. The Word must be rewritten in our hearts and remain firmly fixed there, by the same Spirit, else it is for us a dead word and of none effect. We might read the Holy Scriptures again and again for years, without gaining any real blessing from them, and be astonished to find them of so little power and so little justified by our experience, if the Holy Spirit did not explain them and apply them to us, by coming Himself to dwell in us.

Well, this same Spirit which applies and explains to us the Word of God is He who worketh in us all things. The work of the Father, who has saved us without money and without price, and the work of the Son, who has purchased us with His precious blood, is all in vain, without the work of the Holy Spirit, who opens our souls to believe in the Father and in the Son, and to put in practice the words of life. The Scripture represents to us man, the heart of man, where all is great, infinite, and eternal, as a spectacle

exciting the attention of the holy angels, and of the Lord Himself, in which a continual battle is being fought between the powers of hell and the powers of heaven; a renewal of the great combat between the same two powers, in the inner and outer life of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which He was completely victor, and made us thereby, in our turn, more than conquerors in Him who hath loved us.

We are thus either the dwelling-places and the slaves of the spirit of darkness, or the happy, most happy slaves and abiding-places of the Spirit of light and of life; and it is for us to choose, either the one by unbelief, or the other by faith, for it is written: "I have set before thee life and good, and death and evil; therefore choose." But there is this difference, which is well worthy of the loving mercy of God: the spirit of Satan, ingenious as he may be in trying and forcing all the entrances and gate-ways to our hearts, is nevertheless not able to unite himself entirely to our spirit and become one with it, while, on the other hand, the Spirit of God deigns to penetrate us, and to join Himself so entirely to us, that we become temples of the Holy Ghost; and, filled thus with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, we are rendered able to do the works which He did, and even in one sense, still greater: as He said Himself, in announcing the promise of the Comforter:

"He that believeth on Me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;" so much so, that Jesus declares to His disciples, that for the sake of the Holy Spirit which He would send them, it were better for them if He left them: "It is expedient for you that I go away."

O my Saviour, how often have I longed to have Thee near to me, as Thou wert to Peter and John, to be able to approach Thee, to converse with Thee, and consult Thee! But Thou declarest to me Thyself, that there is a gift so precious that, to possess it, it were better for me that Thou shouldst depart. And this gift hast Thou given to me, by the Holy Spirit!

Who are they who know and value the gift of the Holy Spirit? All that we can say is, that God grants to His Church of to-day the grace to feel how little it has appreciated and possessed this Creator-Spirit. He is none other than God Himself, coming to dwell in us, and to make all things new in us, the Holy Spirit, to whom nothing is impossible. Happy he who believes and doubts not! If I have a terrible temptation to overcome, it is not I who am to conquer it, but the Spirit of God, whom I call down into my heart by prayer. If I have to bear pain, intolerable to my body, it is not I who bear it, but the Spirit of God whom I summon to my heart by prayer. If I am to

clothe myself with the spirit of love, so contrary to our natural selfishness, it is not I who will be able to exercise the power and force of love, but it is the Spirit of God within me, invoked by prayer—and in all else the same. To doubt that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to accomplish the work to which we are called, we must begin by doubting, first, that God is faithful to His promises, and then that He has the necessary power to fulfil them. "O my friends," said once a dying Christian, "even at our very best days we have our eyes only half open." I apply these words most particularly to the virtue and power of the Holy Spirit; for, if we had our eyes fully open, to see Him and appreciate Him, would there be all the complaints and groaning that are in our midst? and should we not ever be seen filled with the power of the communion of Christ to accomplish our work?

My friends, look at the place which the Holy Spirit occupies in Scripture, in the promises of Christ to His apostles. Observe the transition, worked by the Spirit, from the Gospels to the Acts; the immense change brought about in the apostles themselves, to show to all disciples, of all generations, what It is capable of doing in all time. The Holy Spirit is the great promise of the New Testament, and puts the crowning seal upon all the rest.

Elected of the Father, ransomed by the Son, if we are filled with the Holy Spirit, and live in His life, then and then only are we put in possession of our heritage here, while waiting for it in its fulness in a better world, under a sky more serene, freed from all infirmities of flesh and earth; when we shall be nothing other than temples of the Holy Spirit, when even our bodies have become glorious and spiritual bodies.

Sink, then, soon into earth, thou vile body of dust and of sin, and give place to the glorious body—to the spiritual body, in which we shall do the will of God, with the perfection even of Christ Himself; and, by the light of the Holy Spirit, shall know all the gifts and all the graces of the same Spirit, and know them to enjoy them; and, above all, enjoy our power to love as we are loved!

XXII.

ALL IN JESUS CHRIST.

(March 9, 1856.)

1 Corinthians ii. 1–10: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: Yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Collecting and summing up with you, my dear friends, as if under your own eyes, the results to which the experience of my life and Gospel-ministry and

study of the Word of God have led me, and confirmed in me, I said last Sunday, "All by the Holy Spirit;" let us say to-day, all in Jesus Christ. We are sometimes tempted to represent Jesus Christ to ourselves as having only opened to us the gates of heaven, and then in some sort as having left us to find our way thither ourselves; but this is a very narrow view to take of what our Lord has done for us, and what He is for us. St. Paul's thoughts certainly soared far higher than this, when he wrote: "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." For him, all of God is comprised in Jesus Christ, and all of Jesus Christ in His cross. And elsewhere, "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;" whence we see that Jesus Christ was not only given to us to wash away our sins, in His blood once shed for us, but that He is given to us again, after we have been reconciled with God by His precious blood, to lead us, to sanctify us, to fill us with wisdom, and to accomplish all things in us. Again, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." God dwells in Christ, in the flesh, under a visible form, and dwells there in His whole fulness, with all His glory and all His eternal perfections. Still again, another very profound passage from the

same apostle: "All (things) are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Here we see God, in admirable and marvellous hierarchy, at the head of the entire organization of eternal truth, sending and leading His Son, and His Son, in His turn, calling us and adopting us to Himself, in order that, in the name of the Son, we may have dominion over all things, may possess the whole universe in right of membership with Him to whom the whole universe is subject. "All things are yours," the first step; the second, "Ye are Christ's;" and "Christ is God's," the third step, or the first, the supreme fact, to which all the rest attaches itself, and upon which all the rest depends.

How far we are now from the thought of those who represent Christ to themselves as having only accomplished one act, his principal act, our salvation! Jesus Christ is the God of man, as Pascal has so well said in a few pages devoted to showing, in a truly Christian manner, the place occupied by Christ between God and us; He is the God of man; He is God who has given Himself to us; He has given Himself to us quite entirely; and when we possess Jesus Christ by true faith, we possess nothing less than God Himself, and, in Him, life eternal: "He that hath the Son, hath life . . . God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

Whatever, then, may be our need which craves satisfying, in our souls or in our entire existence earthly and eternal, we find it in Jesus Christ. Do we crave, above all, that our sins be blotted out? He has washed them away with His blood. There is only one thing can take away sin; no pennace of ours, no repentance of ours, no amount of almsgiving or of other good works; not even our prayers—the blood of Christ alone. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin." Every sin, covered by the blood of Christ, is forever annihilated before God. He Himself can no longer see it. I could use still stronger language, without departing from Scripture. "The iniquity of Israel," says a prophet, "shall be sought for and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found. . . . He has cast our sins behind His back," that He may no more see them. "He has cast them into the depths of the sea;" and, looking at us in Christ, He looks upon us as without sin, even as Christ Himself, who was "made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Do we long for comfort in our sufferings? We go to Christ; He has suffered like ourselves, more than ourselves, infinitely more than we are able to suffer, infinitely more than we can conceive of the possibility

of suffering; all our sorrows are but a little rivulet detached from the mighty river of His infinite sorrow, and from His cross alone all consolation and all pity and mercy flow. To the Man of sorrows we must go for consolation and peace, knowing that He understands our languor and feebleness, and, in going to Him, we shall find not only relief from our sufferings, but shall see in them real blessings; our most bitter afflictions will in the end be found the most signal marks of His grace.

Do we seek understanding and wisdom, strength and power to resist sin? Whatever we need, in this world or in the other, we find all in Christ. If we have Christ, we have all things, and without Him we have absolutely nothing. Hence the Apostle St. Paul, in the wonderful passage I have just quoted, says: "All (things) are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." All things are yours if you are Christ's, who is God's. No man will contest the relation of God to Christ; nor, if we are real Christians, can Christ's relation to us be contested. Well, then, what follows? Why, that all things are ours. Am I poor? All the fortunes of the world belong to me; for they are Christ's and He is God's, and God will give me, with Him and besides Him, all the wealth of the earth, if it be for my good. If, instead of riches, He gives

me poverty, it is because poverty is best for me, and therefore His choice for me. The whole world and all its glories and powers belong to me, for they belong to my Father, and He will give them to me to-morrow, or even to-day, if they are for my greatest good; for He disposes of them according to His will and pleasure. Am I sick? Health is mine, strength is mine, comfort is mine, a perfect enjoyment of all the blessings of life is mine. For all this is Christ's, and Christ is God's, and He will give all as He sees fit. And to whom will He give them, if not to me, His child? If He then withholds them from me to-day, for a short, fleeting moment, which passes like the weaver's shuttle, it is only because He has His reasons for doing so; and there are hidden blessings in my bitterness and sorrow, worth far more to me than health ever so precious, or comfort ever so sweet. He never deprives me of any blessing, unless to grant me some other and greater: there is my consolation—I find it all in His love.

Do I desire wisdom and understanding? Well, suppose even that I remain ignorant all my life; that, in this world, I have never had opportunity to cultivate my faculties; still, in Christ I am learned. With the knowledge of Christ, I am more advanced and enlightened by the things of God, than the man of this

world who has passed his whole life with his books; for I know the uncreated, eternal light which he does not know, the light in which God Himself delights, and by which I am infallibly led through all the darkness of life. I defy you to find any thing of which I cannot say: "This is my Father's, therefore it is mine; if He refuses it to me to-day, He will give it me to-morrow: I trust in His love. Every thing is mine if I am Christ's."

Observe also that St. Paul says in the chapter we have read: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." O my friends, let us not be so ungrateful as to forget that under the cross, and by the cross alone, Christ has earned and gained for us the immense happiness which I try to describe, of which, however, I am able to gain no glimpse, nor to form the slightest conception. His blood shed, His inconceivable sufferings, have accomplished all for us. His love is the principle of our salvation, and of our entire redemption. His love is our Saviour.

Here we began, and here we will finish. We will go to His cross, and seat ourselves under it; we will allow nothing in the world to remove us from the place where we desire to live and to die.

Dear friends, very soon the things of this world

will have passed away. In the world we have sorrow, but let us be of good cheer, Jesus Christ has overcome the world; the strong man has been bound by a stronger than himself, and we are now in the presence of Christ, who has purchased us with His blood, and is waiting to crown us with glory and happiness. Do you not desire His glory? Do you not wish for His love? Know Him, then, even as He is. Lay hold upon Him wholly, by a sincere faith, that you may realize the admirable words of the apostle upon which we have been meditating; that you may be happy in life, and still happier in death; that life, sad as it is for the man of the world, may be for you an existence of constantly-increasing light and peace, until the day of Christ, to whom be rendered all praise, honor, and glory, and, above all, the homage of our hearts and of our love, responsive, were it possible, to His own!

XXIII.

THE TRINITY.

(March 16, 1856.)

ROMANS VIII. 12–17: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."

HOLY Scripture is wise, even in its silence. You will search the Bible in vain for the word *Trinity*, as an expression of the doctrine upon which, if God give me strength, I have it at heart to say a few words to you. Why is this? Because the word *Trinity* would present to our minds the idea of something speculative, whereas the doctrine which human theology in later days has appropriately called by this name is, of all

doctrines, the most practical and the most tender, because the very expression of God's love, whether in His relations with humanity, or in the inner relations of God to Himself. The principle of our salvation lies in the love of God. "We love Him, because He first loved us;" "God is love," and this love is manifested to us in the work of our salvation; but it has been revealed to us, not only in saving us, but as existing from all eternity in the heart of God, and causing His eternal happiness, before making ours and that of all His faithful creatures.

In order to understand the manner in which the love of God operates upon His poor, lost creatures, to give them the life eternal, which they have lost by their own doing, we have only to follow simply the historic order in which God has given us His revelations, and inspired His prophets and apostles to furnish us His Scriptures. Thus we find first, the God of the Old Testament; then the God of the Gospels; and, lastly, the God of the Epistles and Gospel prophecies.

In the Old Testament, we learn already enough to fill our hearts with joy (O my God! show forth Thy strength in my infirmity!) — we find there quite enough to fill our hearts with joy, namely, that, all unworthy of His love as we have rendered ourselves, God has nevertheless loved us. We have deserved,

thousands and thousands of times, that He should declare Himself against us: and if any one is not thoroughly penetrated with this thought, he has only to turn to the pages of the prophets (in particular Ezekiel), which are filled full of the terrible doctrine of the judgments of God which the Israelites, by their evil deeds, had drawn down upon themselves. They deserved them, however, no more than the rest of mankind, for their history is only the mirror of that of all mankind. But observe that, instead of declaring Himself against us, God declares Himself for us; and we learn that, precisely when we ought to expect to meet a torrent of anger, we find a treasure of mercy. The all-powerful God, who has created heaven and earth, the author of all things, visible and invisible, is entirely *for us;* He only asks to save us; and whoever is willing to enter into His views and thoughts, to confess his sins and submit Himself to His pardon and grace, will possess eternal life, just as if he had never sinned; or, rather, having sinned, but now reconciled, he will possess it with a new sentiment of the mercy that is in God. In this wise, God reveals Himself to us in the Old Testament, divine love penetrating everywhere, and removing the heavy burden of divine anger. The prophets, who denounce these terrible judgments, are not long able to maintain such lan-

guage, and always finish with words of mercy. You will find this illustrated in a very remarkable manner by the prophet Micah, who in very few pages develops with admirable fulness the plan of condemnation, of prophecy, and of the salvation upon which he finally rests.

Then come the Gospels predicted by the prophets. And now God takes a step further: He draws near to us; He is not satisfied with declaring, as from a distance, that He is for us, but He comes to live in close union with us, like one of ourselves, Son of Man, taken from among men, albeit Son of God as He is. Having been for us, He is now *with us*, close to us, like a brother and a friend, with whom, in the words of the fifty-fifth Psalm, we may "take sweet counsel together."

God now shows Himself to us under a much tenderer and more consoling aspect than that under which we saw Him in the Old Testament, more especially when this brother and friend ends by revealing to us the doctrine of divine justice and divine mercy, by dying for us upon the cross, and there blotting out our sins. But while this so tender a relation develops itself between God and us, another relation develops itself in the heart of God Himself, and we learn that He who ransoms us is the Son of Him who wishes to

save us; that between God, as He appears in the Old Testament, and the God of the Gospels, there exists the touching relationship of Father and Son: we cannot understand this relationship in God, but we can at least discern in it something at once ineffably tender and mysterious. Remark well, that one of these relations could not exist without the other, and that we shall never understand what God is for us, in Jesus Christ, if we do not, in part at least, see what Jesus Christ is for God—and all the more that there is, besides, something else which must not escape us. We can only comprehend the spirit of love in its fulness, as a spirit of sacrifice: but with God, it would seem, sacrifice were impossible; for what can for a moment interrupt His eternal felicity? But, behold, in the person of His Son, the Lord of lords sets us the example of sacrifice; He who is the Son of the Father, is at the same time the "Man of sorrows;" and in Him, in whom "dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily," is displayed to our touched and grateful hearts, all the ineffable immensity of suffering of which humanity is capable—and capable only through its union with divinity.

And do you not see that this touching doctrine would completely disappear, if the Son is not one with the Father, and that all that excites our tender grati-

tude for the Lord Jesus Christ depends upon the fact that He is veritably Son of God, that is to say, God, as He is the Son of Man, that is to say, Man?

Next come the Epistles and the Gospel prophecy; and how do they open? By the descent of the Holy Ghost, who founds the Church, by coming and abiding with it. This is the third and last step which God takes, to meet His poor fallen creature, and we could conceive of none further. He was already with us, now observe that He comes to establish Himself *in us*, and to make Himself so far one with us that of these wretched bodies, born of the dust, and become slaves of sin, He forms temples of His Holy Spirit, the home of God, where it pleases Him to dwell. The Holy Spirit, in other words, God, now gives Himself to us, after having been for us in the Old Testament and with us in the Gospels. This is the highest reach of divine love; it cannot content itself, if not made one with us, if not come to dwell in us, "He in us, and we in Him."

And here again remark, my dear friends, that all the force of this doctrine of life would disappear if the Holy Spirit, instead of being God Himself, were only an emanation from God, or an act or a gift of God. It would be then but a repetition of what we know abundantly from the Old Testament and the Gospels

of the power and the grace that God is able and willing to communicate to us; while, on the other hand, the Holy Ghost, as He reveals Himself to us in the epistles, the end of the New Testament, and in the promises of Jesus Christ to His disciples, being God Himself, is the power of God that strengthens us, is the peace of God that comforts us, the holiness of God which delivers us from evil, and the life of God which beats in our hearts.

Oh! who can measure and understand the immense progress in advance, from the last chapter of the Gospels, to the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles? Who can properly appreciate the wonderful march of revelation and of the divine gifts, in the three parts of Holy Scripture which we have been considering? We have done so, alas! far too rapidly for the importance of the subject, although too much at length for the failing powers of him who speaks; for I am only able to indicate, thus briefly, this most admirable view of the subject.

The relations of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to man, correspond to a relation of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in God, and the love which is lavished for our salvation is the expression of the love which from eternity has dwelt in the bosom of God. Ah! the doctrine we are studying, how profound and

touching it becomes to us! It is the very pith of the Gospel, and those who reject it, as purely speculative and theological, have never, in any degree, understood it. It is the strength of our heart, the joy of our soul, the life of our life, and the very foundation of revealed truth.

But I am obliged to stop, and to leave for your own meditation what I should have desired to add to what has been said, and must confine myself, in conclusion, to repeating a few words which I have often quoted, but which some here may not have heard. They sum up, most admirably, the whole doctrine we have been discussing. A father of the Church has said: "In the Old Testament, we have *God for us;* in the Gospels, *God with us;* and in the Epistles, *God in us.*"

That this God, for you, with you and in you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, may be yours and mine, for life and for death, I desire from the very depths of my heart, devoted to you in Christ Jesus!

XXIV.

THE RESURRECTION.

(Easter Day, March 23, 1856.)

Ephesians ii. 1–10: "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

It is written, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" that is to say, it possesses the double virtue of rendering future things present, and invisible things visible. Now, sup-

pose there were a fact in which this double property of faith were realized, and as it were incorporated, a fact adding the clearness of reality to the power of faith, would not this fact be the very foundation of all our knowledge, and the firmest support of our hopes? This fact is the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture begins by uniting the Christian so closely by faith to his Saviour, that any thing happening to Him, happens also to us, and His history is essentially reproduced in the inner life of each one of His children. If He dies, we die; if He rises again, we rise again; if He ascends to heaven, we also ascend to heaven. Thus are we saved, because by faith made one with Christ, and Him we are not permitted to seek elsewhere than in eternal glory, which obliges us to seek ourselves there also, being one with Him by faith.

But Jesus Christ, after having lived and died under the eyes of men, rises again also under their eyes, and shows Himself again to men after His resurrection. So then, the resurrection of our Saviour, which belongs also to us, like all the rest, becomes a visible event, making our own resurrection visible, from being invisible, as it was before. You remember those heretics of whom St. Paul speaks, who said that the resurrection had already taken place, looking upon it as a purely spiritual event: they are in flagrant opposition

to the doctrine of the Gospel; for this makes of our Saviour's resurrection, and of our own, which we are to enjoy after Him and with Him, a real, material, corporeal fact—showing us, in our Lord's resurrection, our own, as if already before our eyes. What an immense blessing and privilege, for the Christian to contemplate in Jesus Christ, visibly raised from the dead, his own resurrection, which would seem invisible, and in one sense is so, but which becomes visible in his Saviour! It is thus raised above, I will not say all doubt, but above even all the difficulties of faith, and becomes a clear, appreciable fact, easily grasped, that we find in Jesus Christ, and apply to ourselves.

And at the same time—for in my present condition I can do no more than merely touch upon the various thoughts presented by the subject—the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ converts a future event into an event present, and even already past. If He were not raised from the dead, we should always look upon the resurrection as upon something to come, and presenting, for this reason, the idea of something always obscure, and difficult to grasp, albeit the promises of God are certain. But God has here joined to His promise an historic fact. Jesus Christ did rise from the dead. He was seen; behold Him!—and our resurrection, which is united with that of the Saviour

and follows from it, becomes in the same way itself an historic fact, a fact present and a fact past. St. Paul says, therefore, that we are already risen again. He "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." By the resurrection of our Saviour, then, our salvation, from being invisible, becomes visible; from being future, becomes present and actual. What more could we ask?

The Christian alone can feel a firm assurance of his reconciliation with God and of his eternal happiness, because to him invisible things have passed into the domain of things visible and present; and he can enjoy their contemplation in some sort with his eyes, seizing them even in this life. You will further remark, dear friends, that wherever the resurrection of our Saviour is kept in the background, the assurance of our salvation remains there with it. Thus, in the Church of Rome, where attention is constantly called to the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and not to His resurrection; where the essential and principal ceremony of the Church, the mass, is the celebration of the death of Jesus Christ, there is no assurance of our salvation; we should become even scrupulous about being sure of our safety, and take as it were a sort of pride in our scruples, and wrest certain passages of Scripture to make them declare that it is never permitted us to be

sure of our safety: which means that there can never be peace nor ever firm hope for the Christian. There are, unfortunately, many Protestants who are no further advanced, and who cannot rejoice in the assurance of their salvation: this is because they do not contemplate Jesus Christ raised from the dead and now living and mediating between God and us; nor do they regard the relations between God and our souls as living, present, historic facts. But the Christian, enlightened upon the subject of the resurrection of our Saviour, enjoys the assurance of his salvation. He is as certain of it as he is certain that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, and, to make him doubt his eternal hope, he must be made to doubt the resurrection of our Saviour.

This is why the day we are celebrating is the grandest day of the Christian year, and the event we are calling to mind to-day is not *an* event in the kingdom of heaven, but *the* event in the kingdom of heaven. The resurrection of our Saviour is the essential fact which the apostles devoted themselves to teach.

Now, my friends, let us seize this resurrection, and hold fast to it; let us live with the risen Christ, and we shall delight in the precious privilege. But at the same time let us not forget the price at which the resurrection has been purchased for us, nor the road to

it over which our Saviour passed; that our hearts may taste the happiness of this assurance, only in a deep feeling of gratitude and love to Him to whom we owe it.

Receive these few words in the love of the Lord, as I address them to you—it is all that I am able to say—and let us, one and all, apply ourselves to meditating upon them, and expanding them in His presence, in the silence of prayer and in the study of the Word of God, at the feet of the risen Saviour, and in the love of Jesus Christ crucified! Amen!

XXV.

GOD IS LOVE.

(March 30, 1856.)

PSALM C.: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations."

I ASKED our friend to read this Psalm to us, dear friends. I have only strength enough left to occupy myself with the love of God. That God has loved us, is the whole doctrine of the Gospel. Let us love God, is its whole moral. Although I hardly know if I have the power to make myself heard, I summon my little remaining strength to invoke, with you, the eternal and infinite love of God.

O God, whose name is love, Thou who hast never done any thing to us, nor doest any thing to us,

nor wilt ever do any thing to us, otherwise than in and by love, how can I return Thee thanks enough, when I see these my brethren drawn together by love around my bed of sickness and of suffering, and of that, besides, which Thou alone canst know! I rejoice in their love. Who has ever received more testimonies of love than I? Should I not be the most ungrateful of men, if I were not the most thankful?

Wherefore, O my God, I return Thee thanks; and still more, were it possible, do I thank Thee for Thy love—Thy love which has so sorely afflicted, but so powerfully sustained me. I confess Thy love, before these who have never allowed me to want any help in their power to give, although I have been oft wanting in faith and patience, and far from having attained the perfect resignation to which I aspire.

But Thou hast been to me kindness and goodness itself; and, so long as a breath of life and strength may remain to me, will I confess it before these. Thy goodness, Thy goodness! I thank Thee for Thy gratuitous mercy, that Thou hast manifested Thy goodness in freely pardoning, without merit of mine, all my faults; and, though the chief of sinners, the least of Thy children, the poorest of Thy servants, Thou hast heaped Thy mercies upon me, and made me an instrument for the advancement of Thy kingdom, even when

plunged, as to-day, in the extreme of weakness and suffering! Oh, I thank Thee that Thou hast given me a Saviour! Without Him, O my God, I confess that I should be irrevocably lost, and plunged to-day in the most frightful despair. But I have a Saviour, who, by His blood shed, has saved me without money and without price, and I desire it to be known that I trust entirely and solely in that shed blood; that all my righteousness, all my works which have been praised, my preachings which have been appreciated and admired—that all this is in my eyes "as filthy rags," that I have nothing at all in myself, capable of standing one moment before the brilliancy of Thy face, or the light of Thy sanctity. Now, however, it is not I who will be judged; but Christ within me: and I know, I know, that He will enter in, and I with Him; that He and I are so closely united that He can never enter in and leave me without.

My God, I render Thee thanks with all these my friends, to whom Thou hast accorded the same privilege, and the same consolation. To them hast Thou deigned, even as to me, to give the Holy Spirit, to apply to their souls the free, gratuitous gift of life eternal, by the blood of Jesus Christ.

I thank Thee first for my dear family; I thank Thee for my brothers and sisters, and for my friends

who have been ever brothers and sisters to me, and who are now testifying, by their love and their tears, their tender sympathy for me, though I deserve it in no wise, and confess myself entirely unworthy of it. But Thou hast put it into their hearts for me, to my great comfort and consolation.

I thank Thee for all things. I thank Thee for Thy consolations during the past week; for the nomination of the professor of Montauban, which has been for us a subject of so much anxiety and prayer; for the peace[1] signed this very day, for which we have so earnestly supplicated Thee, knowing that peace on earth is conducive now, as formerly of old, to that peace which cometh from on high.

Lord, I desire to be sincere before Thee. It is true that I am in much suffering, and that my joy and thanksgivings are sorely clouded by constant pain and exhaustion. But Thou hast sustained me to this hour, and I have confidence that my prayers, and the prayers of my family and friends, will obtain for me the perfect patience which I crave.

And now, Lord, I take all these my friends, and lay them on Thy fatherly breast, in the name of Jesus, by the Holy Spirit. May there be not one in this room who will not be found in the eternal taberna-

[1] After the Crimean War.

cles! Seated at the table of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, may we be able to recall, with unmingled joy, the day which brought us together here! O my God, sanctify us wholly, and may all that remains to us of life be entirely devoted to Thy service. May Thy Holy Spirit dwell in us, may it be our soul, our life, and our joy, both of ourselves, of our families, of our afflicted ones. O Lord, many of us have dear ones lying sick; we commend them to Thee. I bear them all upon my heart before Thee. I will not call them by name, lest in my weakness I forget and cause pain to any here; but I take them all, and lay them at the foot of the cross of Jesus, that Thou mayst console them and sanctify them.

May Thy grace and Thy peace be with us all now and for evermore! Amen.

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